

G U R P S<sup>®</sup>

# Castle Falkenstein

*High Adventure in the Steam Age*



By Phil Masters and James L. Cambias

**STEVE JACKSON GAMES**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

*"Then Auberon raised his arms and shouted, 'Now it begins!' Blue light shot from his hands, and the entire fortress rocked as if struck by an earthquake . . ."*

— Col. Fritz von Tarlenheim, describing the reconstruction of Castle Falkenstein in his *Remembrances*.

The world of *Castle Falkenstein* is fantastic.

That is to say, it is a *world* of the fantastic. It may not appear that way at first glance; it seems to be a duplicate of our own world, circa A.D. 1870; admittedly, something (or someone) has ripped a great gash through north–western Europe, and the United States has been stymied in its westward expansion by Native American resistance, but even changes of that magnitude seem not to have made huge differences to the general flow of history. Prussian expansion threatens the borders of its neighbors; Britannia rules the waves, where sail is disappearing before steam; Charles Darwin's theories are radically controversial; the American Civil War is a recent, painful memory.

But look closer. Faeries, trolls, and dryads live alongside humanity — and these are the uncanny, powerful fairy–folk of myth. Dwarfs labor beneath the mountains, and dragons ride the thermals above. Humans, too, wield magick, while even the science of the age seems fantastical; "steampunk" technology produces Babbage engines, mighty airships, and infernal weapons. Even the people of the age emerge from legend as well as history; Sherlock Holmes begins his long duel of wits with Professor Moriarty, Nemo and Robur assert their power over sea and sky, and a certain Colonel Flashman is ever the hero of the hour. This is a world of swashbuckling swordplay, of heroes and villains, and of melodrama such as our own world only imagine, even in its own Victorian age. Thus, it is a world of adventure.

This world was first described for roleplayers in a series of books from R.Talsorian Games, including a rule–system specially designed for the setting, over the period 1994–1997. Now, *Castle Falkenstein* returns, adapted for *GURPS*, and hence for players who prefer a more "generic" approach to rules; this version can also make use of the huge range of supplements and extensions available for the *GURPS* system.

So prepare your spells, check that your service pistol is loaded, and fire up your patent steam ornithopter; adventure awaits!

## 1.0.1 About the Authors

### 1.0.1.1 Mr James Cambias

A native of the Free State of Orleans, Mr. Cambias has ventured far in the service of learning and literature. He studied occult mysteries and forbidden science in the city of Chicago, and now resides in the Unseelie–haunted wilds of New York State. Happily united with the object of his True Love, Mr. Cambias devotes his time to literary and journalistic pursuits.

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## 1.0.1.2 Mr Philip Masters

A scholar after his own peculiar fashion, and a gentleman of sorts by the dubious standards of the debased modern age, Philip Masters, *Magister Artium Cantabrigiensis*, is a citizen of Great Britain who has seen some forty years pass by. Previously employed in the manipulation of computational engines for vulgar commercial purposes, he is today another occupant of that shabby by-way off Grub Street reserved for those who scribble material pertaining to "Adventure Games."

## 1.0.2 About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the **GURPS** system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

*Pyramid* ([www.sjgames.com/pyramid](http://www.sjgames.com/pyramid)). Our online magazine includes new rules and articles for **GURPS**. It also covers the hobby's top games — *Advanced Dungeons Dragons*, *Traveller*, *World of Darkness*, *Call of Cthulhu*, *Shadowrun*, and many more — and other Steve Jackson Games releases like *In Nomine*, *INWO*, *Car Wars*, *Toon*, *Ogre Miniatures*, and more. And *Pyramid* subscribers also have access to playtest files online, to see (and comment on) new books before they're released.

*New Supplements and adventures.* **GURPS** continues to grow, and we'll be happy to let you know what's new. A current catalog is available for an SASE. Or check out our Web site (below).

*Errata.* Everyone makes mistakes, including us — but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all **GURPS** releases, including this book, are always available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE with your request. Or download them from the Web — see below.

*QWe do our best to answer any game question accompanied by an SASE.*

*Gamer input.* We value your comments. We will consider them, not only for new products, but also when we update this book on later printings!

*Internet.* Visit us on the World Wide Web at [www.sjgames.com](http://www.sjgames.com) for an online catalog, errata, updates, and hundreds of pages of information. We also have conferences on CompuServe and AOL. **GURPS** has its own Usenet group, too: [rec.games.frp.gurps](mailto:rec.games.frp.gurps).

*GURPSnet.* Much of the online discussion of **GURPS** happens on this e-mail list. To join, send mail to [majordomo@io.com](mailto:majordomo@io.com) with "subscribe GURPSnet-L" in the body, or point your World Wide Web browser to: <http://gurpsnet.sjgames.com/>.

The **GURPS Castle Falkenstein** web page is at: [www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/castlefalkenstein/](http://www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/castlefalkenstein/).



### 1.0.2.1 Page References

See *GURPS Compendium I*, p.181, or SJ Games' Web site for a full list of abbreviations for *GURPS* titles. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to *GURPS Basic Set Third Edition Revised*; e.g., p.B102 refers to page 102 of *Basic Set*. *CI* refers to Compendium I, *M* refers to GURPS Magic, *WWi* to Who's Who 1, and *WWii* to Who's Who 2.

## AA 1. THE WORLD OF CASTLE FALKENSTEIN

The world of *Castle Falkenstein* resembles our own, as of the 1870s, in many ways — while being spectacularly different in many others. In essence, it's a world where magic works, and where a number of non-human, supernatural races and beings are a major, visible part of the scene, but where history has nonetheless followed broadly the same pattern as in universes without these features. With Victorian technology taking off in wild "steampunk" directions, and major figures on the world scene who were merely fictional in our past, the crucial question for the inhabitants of that world is how far events will continue to follow the same pattern as in other universes, and how far various forces, some of them consciously aware of the possibilities, can change them — for better or for worse.

## 1.1 Some History

According to Auberon, king of the faerie Seelie Court, history seems to have followed much the same general pattern in each of the several parallel worlds he has visited, albeit that each was at a different point in history when he arrived there. (Time also appears to progress at different relative rates in different universes, incidentally.) Unfortunately, Auberon is not the most reliable of witnesses, and for all anyone knows, there may be constraints on what worlds the faerie folk can visit — but certainly, reports from others of his kind have never been found to contradict Auberon's accounts to any great extent.

### 1.1.1 What Has Gone Before

Thus, the *Falkenstein*-world's continents have much the same shape as our own (barring the addition of one small sea — see the sidebar on p. 00), and humanity seems to have evolved there much as here. However, the first great divergence goes back millions of years beyond that, to the age of the dinosaurs, when one branch of the family of flying reptiles now called *pterosaurs* developed a sensitivity to the patterns of magick in its surroundings. This seems to have started before the race evolved serious intelligence, which probably appeared as an aid to handling these forces. Over evolutionary time, the pterosaurs used magick to enhance their flying abilities, enabling them to grow to great size in defiance of aerodynamic physics, and then to master shapeshifting and other useful tricks which enabled them to survive the great extinction that wiped out the dinosaurs. The eventual result was *Pterodraconis Sapiens* — the dragon.

When human beings appeared, dragons were slightly amused and mostly unimpressed, but eventually found profitable ways to interact with them. However, dragonkind has tended to stand back from entanglement in human affairs — unlike the next non-human race to appear on the scene.

#### 1.1.1.1 The Faerie Host

It is no great secret that, when Auberon stepped onto the northern Alps in around 12,000 B.C., this was not the first world of solid matter that the Faerie Host had visited. It is perhaps fortunate that few mortals realize quite how much damage

# 1 INTRODUCTION

the faeries had done during their previous travels.

Faeries originated in the void between the universes, the so-called "Faerie Veil." In this featureless realm of pure energy, physical life is an impossibility, but *intelligence* could survive, holding itself together by pure will and eventually learning to shape its surroundings. However, these faeries had no idea what to do with the vast energies at their disposal, until they somehow found their way into a material universe. There, they ran amok.

Leaving at least one dead world behind them, they returned to the Veil and began shaping it to match what they had seen. However, they have never acquired the imagination to formulate new ideas; they had to find further worlds to visit and exploit. Thus, they discovered, not only that their powers were more constrained in some worlds than others, but that some held mortal powers that could give them a serious fight, and even win. Their casualties included many of the most powerful of their kind; in fact, faerie nobles were obliged to mate with humans to perpetuate their power, reinforcing both the Seelie affection for humanity and the Unseelie disgust.

Not that all of them found it easy to acknowledge their limitations, and not that they are ever easily defeated. In time, they divided into two factions. The "Seelie Court," led by Auberon, consists of faeries that have developed consciences of a sort, or at least sentiment, or a sense of restraint and an inclination to conserve the source of their ideas, images, and many pleasures — mortal humanity. The "Unseelie Court," ruled by the being known as *The Adversary*, takes the view that there are always more worlds to plunder, or at least that faeries have and should use the power to keep prey under control, and that it is unbecoming for faeries to deal with mortals as equals — and also that it is amusing to rule by terror.

Bringing their attitudes with them to this new world, the faeries settled in, spread, and diversified. One faction, the dwarfs, actually renounced much of their faerie heritage, gaining in return power over the metals which fascinated them and which are so dangerous to other faeries. The Seelie and Unseelie fought a great war in the land that would become Ireland; both sides suffered horrendous casualties, reducing their strength further. At one point, Auberon tricked The Adversary into signing an unbreakable treaty that barred him and the other Unseelie from ever making war on humanity — the so-called "First Compact." It is even strongly suspected that Auberon's magick is responsible for the very existence of the Inner Sea, which divides northern Europe from the lands to its south-west; if so, faerie power has declined since that era.

Faeries haunted Egypt as animal-headed gods, Greece as Olympians, and Arabia as djinn; they helped bring about the fall of the Roman Empire (which had been too quick to use iron weapons against them, and whose rulers had become pawns of the faerie factions), and the threat of their power often encouraged the development of human magick. However, their spread was sometimes checked. In the Far East, dragon emperors and enigmatic supernatural forces forced them to remain cautious, while even greater, stranger powers barred the Americas completely to both Courts. Nonetheless, they continued to weave their plots through history. In the modern age, the Unseelie Court's (largely unknowing) chief mortal agent is the most powerful of the principalities into which Germany is still divided.

## 1.1.2 The Rise of Prussia

Having developed its industrial and military power through the eighteenth century, Prussia emerged from the Napoleonic Wars (in which its armies fought with distinction) to find itself penned into its corner of Europe by rivals whose colonial expansions were already well underway. At the same time, other German states on its borders were an endless source of

trouble, with their petty squabbles and shifting alliances. Perhaps not surprisingly, the Prussians gradually formulated a strategy that would solve their problems and bring them power and breathing-space.

Prussia is a monarchy, currently nominally ruled by King William I — but everyone understands that true power lies in the hands of its "Iron Chancellor," Otto von Bismarck (p. 00). Born a mid-ranking Prussian noble, Bismarck was a bright (if wild) university student who avoided the restricted life of a career soldier before eventually entering politics. In our history, he became Prime Minister in 1862, and only took the title of "chancellor" when his policies created a German empire under Prussian leadership in 1871, but in New Europa, his career was predictably a notch more dramatic; he took control of his country, as chancellor, in 1860, and soon began pressing William to take the title of Emperor.

At this point, the Unseelie took notice, and offered Bismarck supernatural aid, faerie spies, and technology plundered from other universes. They also began eliminating his opponents. Encouraged by them, Bismarck's policies became increasingly militaristic, especially when Prussian industry created the mobile *Landwehr* Fortresses; giant steam-powered tanks. In our history, Bismarck, while formidable, used diplomacy as much as physical force, and had his ideals; the Unseelie seemed to be pushing this version into something more vicious.

He was soon picking off small German principalities (and making his larger neighbors nervous); it was becoming clear that, with technology ten years ahead of Great Britain and twenty years ahead of everyone else, the world's largest spy network, and very sinister aid in the shadows, an aggressive Prussia threatened everybody. This, of course, was the Adversary's intention.

However, Auberon had not been idle.

### 1.1.3 Bavaria

Bavaria, known as *Bayern* in German, is the largest and strongest state in southern Germany. Its rulers, the Wittelsbachs, have long been somewhat eccentric; a few years ago, in New European history, King Ludwig I actually abdicated and ran off with the noted courtesan, Lola Montez (p. 00). He was replaced by his son, Maximilian II, whose own oldest son, another Ludwig, was reported dead when his yacht was wrecked in a storm off Greece. That death was always regarded as suspicious — conspiracy theorists mentioned Prussian agents and sorcery — but when Maximilian died in 1864, Bayern had no choice but to accept the succession of Ludwig's insane brother Otto, and the appointment of a Regent who soon displayed a definite prejudice in favor of Prussia.

Then Auberon turned up at a ruined border fortress named *Alt Schloss Falkenstein* with the unconscious body of Crown Prince Ludwig, who he announced he had just rescued from Unseelie captivity. As an encore, Auberon magically reconstructed the castle, larger than before, along the lines of Ludwig's architectural fantasies, then allied with a high-ranking British sorcerer named Morrolan who "happened" to be in the area, and cast a spell to find further aid. This brought them Tom Olam (see sidebar, p. 00), whose exact usefulness took some time to emerge.

Ludwig and a mixed bag of allies were forced to move swiftly to unseat the treacherous regent and claim his throne. When they succeeded, however, Bismarck found himself with an unexpected problem on his southern flank. Ludwig II (see the sidebar) was clearly stable enough to rule, and determined to oppose Prussian expansion. When intrigue and assassination failed him, he made plans for a more direct solution.

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## 1.2 War!

In June 1866, Prussia declared war on several of its neighbors, including both Bayern and Austria. Employing what can only be called blitzkrieg tactics, Prussia crushed Hanover and Saxony, then turned on Austria. Punching a hole in the Austrian defenses (despite the help they received from surviving Saxon forces) at Gitschin, the Prussian general von Moltke swept over Bohemia.

Meanwhile, the Bavarians had gambled. With narrow mountain passes to defend and having identified that the first Prussian attack would be elsewhere, they left a small, picked force (including magickal, faerie, and dragon allies) to hold the frontier, and sent the most of their army to aid with the Austrians. Using rail transport (just as the Prussians were employing it to speed their advance), the allies were able to link up in strength by the beginning of July.

The ensuing encounter was the decisive moment of the war.

### 1.2.1 The Battle of "Königseig"

The Austrians had chosen to make their stand at the fortress town of Königsgrätz. The aging Austrian General Benedek was relying on a river to delay the Prussian land fortresses, while Auberon used weather-magick in an attempt to delay them further, but the giant machines swept across all obstacles, forcing their opponents to fall back. The battle seemed lost when the Bavarian secret weapon arrived.

Using bizarre ideas derived from a book (the so-called "Lost Codex," see the sidebar, p.00) in Olam's backpack, Ludwig's magickal allies had been able to develop a new form of propulsion system for airships; the first example of what would become known as Engine Magick. Adopted by dwarf craftsmen and incorporated into craft built with their extraordinary skill with materials, sorcerous engines powered the first effective attack aircraft in New Europa. The first four of these craft arrived at Königsgrätz just in time.

The Prussians were simply unprepared for attacks from above; their land fortresses were inadequately armored on the upper decks, and their artillery positions were wide open to bombing runs. The morale effects of this unprecedented threat were equally significant; many Prussian troops simply broke and ran. The result was labeled "Königseig" — "King's Victory" — by the press.

#### 1.2.1.1 Aftermath

Bavaria and Austria thus preserved their independence, and the war soon ended in negotiation. However, the essential struggle had barely begun. The Prussians were able to withdraw in generally good order, and were indeed able to retain effective control of Hanover and Hesse-Cassel. Austria had been revealed as a paper tiger, and the new Bayernese advantage was based on a single key secret, which the Prussian intelligence service and their Unseelie allies would immediately make their first priority.

Meanwhile, the Unseelie were laying plans elsewhere in the world, against which the Seelie had to organize countermeasures. For that matter, New Europa is home to a bizarre array of criminal masterminds, evil sorcerers, and secret conspiracies. This is where the heroes come in.

## 1.3 The Second Compact

Part of the basis for the Bavarian victory in the war with Prussia was a new, unique alliance, designed to counter the threat posed by the Unseelie through their Prussian dupes; the threat of a powerful militaristic state bent on world conquest, using not only supernatural powers, but also the worst aspects of New Europa's modern age.

Promoting rapid industrialization wherever it suits them, the Unseelie seek to sow confusion and disruption in human society; a world of industrial robber–barons, polluted skies, and cowed masses will be easy for them to control and eventually destroy. Widespread use of iron (including the new railway network), while occasionally annoying to faeries, would also disrupt the flows of magickal energies, reducing the power of human sorcerers, who, while sometimes dangerous in themselves, were one of the balancing forces that could oppose wholesale Unseelie domination. And individual conquerors and mad scientists could all be exploited, one way or another.

When Ludwig and his court were looking for aid, they were able to identify this threat and explain it to others. The result was an alliance founded on idealism; the *Second Compact*. Signed one Midsummer's Eve in Castle Falkenstein itself, the Compact counts nations, societies, and individuals among its members.

Its mainstays are, of course, the government of Bavaria and the Seelie Court. King Verithrax Draconis put his name to the agreement on behalf of his people, and many dragons have fought valiantly for the cause (although individual members of that solitary race may have their own ideas). France and Austria both recognize the threat posed by Prussia, and their leaders have made at least semi–formal alliances with the Compact; Jules Verne (see p. 00), science minister in the French government, has signed personally. The dwarfs are not members as a race (and in any case, no–one speaks for all the dwarfs), but the Unseelie and the Prussians have shown a grown readiness to exploit and even enslave northern dwarfholds, and several communities and individuals have responded by turning to the Compact.

Other governments are more problematic. Great Britain is too much dominated by the Steam Lords (see sidebar, p. 00), who recognize a kindred spirit in Bismarck and work actively (if secretly) with him to further the cause of runaway industrialization; their agreement is that, ultimately, a Steam Lord–ruled Britain will retain its global empire and sea power while Prussia controls mainland Europe. (How long this alliance would last if it won is an interesting question.) However, Prince Edward (now a personal friend of Ludwig) has secretly signed up to the Compact, along with individual British subjects such as the roguish explorer and sorcerer Sir Richard Burton and the noted scientist Lord Kelvin, who recognizes the dangers of the new science he is researching.

Among the magickal societies of New Europa, the Templars (p. 00) have always been enemies of dark sorcery wherever it appears, and the Illuminated Brotherhood (p. 00), among whom Morrolan is a leading figure, are an established secret conspiracy who fight for individual freedom (albeit by their own definitions and methods); both are aligned with the Compact. The Freemasons (p. 00) have the same tradition as the Illuminati, but only their European branch has come aboard. The American Freemasons are increasingly going their own way politically, and are thought to be all too friendly with the Steam Lords. Several powerful individuals have also signed, notably Captain Nemo (p. 00), commander of the fabulous submarine the *Nautilus*, who hates warfare with a burning passion and sees the Prussians and the Unseelie as its chief current proponents. (He aided Bayern considerably against Prussian forces on the Inner Sea during the recent war.)

In game terms, the Second Compact is an excellent set of allies, patrons, and supporters for heroic PCs. It is very loosely organized except at the highest levels, so characters are unlikely to be full–time "Agents of the Compact," but they may

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work on its behalf for some of its constituents groups or leading figures. In *GURPS* terms specifically, characters working for it should usually take individual members as Patrons, Contacts, or Allies, according to their specific activities, although noted, trusted members may have a Claim to Hospitality with the entire Compact.

The Second Compact takes its symbol from that of the throne of Bayern; the image of a swan. Members often wear this badge on cloak pins, rings, or medallions.

## 1.3.1 "New Europa" (Names and Naming)

Terms used in *Castle Falkenstein* games often reflect those used in the accounts written by Tom Olam (see sidebar, p. 00), which can be quite evocative but also a little confusing. Finding himself adventuring in an area which is mostly like, but sometimes very unlike, Europe in his own world, Olam took to referring to it as "New Europa." Because this was the starting-point for adventures that took him all across the planet, he sometimes used the words rather loosely, even applying them to the entire setting. However, when he remembered, he preferred to refer to the globe as a whole, and the universe in which it exists, as the "World of Castle Falkenstein."

This book attempts to follow this precedent as closely as convenient, using "New Europa" to indicate the continent of Europe and possibly some adjacent lands, and also the culture which dominates there; a culture much like that of Victorian Europe in our world, but colored by the presence of faeries, dragons, dwarfs and magick. (Thus, "the U.S.A. in the World of Castle Falkenstein" is a country which might be said to have a New European culture, albeit with some quirks.) The words "Europe" and "European" are used occasionally, to indicate the continent and its inhabitants specifically, when geography has to be made very clear. However, as New Europa will be the starting-point for most (though by no means all) adventures, and the place of origin of most characters, the term may be used freely and perhaps loosely, as indicating the setting of the game.

## 1.3.2 Castle Falkenstein Itself

The world of the game is named for one of its most . . . intriguing architectural sites, and one that does not exist — save in imagination — on our own.

Physically speaking, Castle Falkenstein was built by Auberon of Faerie, in a single night, by an exercise of magick. Its true creator, however, is at least as much Ludwig II (see p. 00, sidebar). Architecture was always one of Ludwig's eccentric interests; his counterpart in our world created the fairy-tale alpine castles of Linderhof and Neuschwanstein (which do not exist in New Europa). It seems that *this* Ludwig made a deal with Auberon that included the realization of his greatest vision.

Falkenstein stands on the foundations of a ruined medieval fortress, but the site is older than that; a Roman border fort once stood here, and before that, an ancient temple. In fact, what few humans realize is that this spot was where Auberon himself first arrived on this Earth, thousands of years ago, opening a gate from the Faerie Veil. The dwarfs know this, and have legends of deep caves beneath the *Falkenburg* (Falcon's Mountain) where time itself is twisted and dragons fear to tread.

Certainly, the castle is *strange*; its plan seems to shift and twist, and all maps are marked as provisional. Rooms appear and disappear; stories that foolish visitors who wander off in here sometimes never come back are not entirely jokes;

there are substantial hints that the castle has connections to other worlds through the Faerie Veil. The fact that the castle handyman is a mad scientist dwarf is the least source of its oddity.

But those who call Castle Falkenstein home love the place; it embodies all Ludwig's considerable sense of wonder. The king regards it as his private residence, while conducting most government business from other establishments in his capital of Munich. Aside from some major treaty signings and great balls, he rarely entertains in Falkenstein; invitations to visit here would constitute a great honor.

### 1.3.3 Tom Olam

A crucial factor in the recent history of New Europa, Thomas Edward Olam was born either in our world, or one very similar. He found himself in the *Falkenstein* world thanks to a piece of wild magick. He became an adventurer, introduced the idea of role-playing games to another universe, and acts as the narrator of several accounts of that world published in our own.

In *GURPS* terms, Captain Thomas Olam of the Bayernese Secret Service (now) looks like this:

ST 11, DX 12, IQ 11, HT 10.

Speed 5.5, Move 5.

Dodge 5, Parry 8.

*Advantages:* Military Rank 4; Patron (Auberon of Faerie), 9-; Patron (Bayernese Government), 12-; Reputation +2 (as a heroic man of mystery, with anyone who supports the Second Compact, 10-); Sense Faerie (see p. 00); Status +1; Unusual Background (from an alternate universe).

*Disadvantages:* Duty (to the Second Compact), 12-; Reputation -2 (as a d---ed nuisance, among various international conspiracies, 10-).

*Quirks:* Cocky; Fancies himself as a swashbuckler; Opinionated; Romantically attached to Marianne, Countess de Desirée.

*Skills:* Acrobatics-10; Airshipman/TL5-8; Artist-14; Boxing-10; Brawling-12; Computer Operation/TL7-11; Driving/TL7 (car)-10; Fencing-13; Guns/TL5 (pistol)-13; Guns/TL7 (pistol)-12; Intelligence Analysis-8; Professional Skill (Game Designer)-12; Riding (horse)-10; Savoir-Faire-13; Tactics-10; Writing-13.

*Languages:* English (native)-12; German-11.

A computer game artist by profession, Tom Olam didn't seem well suited to the role of swashbuckling hero, his combat training being limited to weekend paintball games, but he got by. His new skills were acquired through intensive training from some formidably capable local experts (and hard experience). He usually has several useful gadgets or disguised weapons hidden about his person. His chief importance to the Second Compact, however, may be that his background enables him to identify anachronistic technology and ideas with unique precision — a vital skill when dealing with some



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Unseelie plots.

Incidentally, readers of his accounts should remember that Tom Olam, like many of his kind, is brash, romantic at heart, and not quite as smart or observant as he likes to think he is. Even if he takes the right side, it may not always be for the right reasons . . .

## 1.3.4 The Lost Codex

When Auberon and Morrolan cast a spell to summon *something* they could use in their war, they were presented with Tom Olam (see p. 00, sidebar) and his backpack. Olam was not an obvious candidate to save the world, although he eventually proved extremely helpful in several ways, but it is now believed that what the spell actually latched on to was a book that happened to be in his backpack.

This was a facsimile copy of what was called the *Codex Pacifica*, the sixth notebook of the legendary Renaissance figure, Leonardo da Vinci. The book in question had recently been rediscovered in his native Earth (having been lost both there and in New Europa), and Olam, taking a European tour, had acquired a copy in Florence before traveling on to Neuschwanstein, in Germany, whence he was magickally abducted. It transpired that Leonardo had, in fact, been sensitive to magickal forces, and the notebook described his attempts to create mechanical devices that could manipulate them.

(Except . . . Olam had not looked at the book much before his adventure, but he remains rather puzzled by its current appearance. He suspects that it has somehow changed during the transfer between universes, and certain references in the text certainly raise complicated questions. Magick is a complex and unpredictable thing; it is not entirely impossible that the book that fell out of Olam's pack in Castle Falkenstein was the version of the *Codex* that *could* exist in this universe, based on writings by Aristotle that also laid the foundations of much modern scholastic magick. Or perhaps the book never changed, but a copy from New Europa was the one that showed up on Olam's world — a world where Leonardo had no previously-known interest in magick, which is certainly not an easily accessible force, and where the book had been written off as eccentric ramblings.)

In any case, the book was found by the dwarf Rhyme, who was working as Castle Falkenstein's handyman. "Borrowing" it while Olam was otherwise preoccupied, Rhyme took it back to his workshop and began experimenting. One spectacular but fortunately fairly harmless magickal accident later, the Second Compact recognized that they had the basis for a whole new magickal technology in their hands.

(See p. 00 on the first practical application of "Engine Magick," and p. 00 for brief guidelines for using it in games.)

## 1.3.5 King Ludwig II of Bayern

As the main text hints, King Ludwig II of Bayern is a somewhat enigmatic figure, and something of a puzzle even to his allies — except perhaps for Auberon, who isn't talking. In our world (and Tom Olam's, if that is different), he is remembered as "Mad King Ludwig," a tragic figure unsuited to rule, who spent the royal treasury pursuing various aesthetic visions until his exasperated ministers removed him; he died shortly thereafter, probably by suicide. (An accident is possible; conspiracy theorists have suggested murder.)

The Ludwig of New Europa certainly displays much of the Wittelsbach eccentricity; he is a night owl, sometimes wildly generous, fond of rich desserts and occasionally distractible. However, his manner is controlled, and can be steely. He is a good leader for Bayern and the Second Compact (p. 00). Still, some of his closest allies suspect that Auberon is telling less than the complete truth.

For one thing, Ludwig appears about ten years older than he should be, and has sometimes let slip references to people and things that don't exist in this universe, and hints that he was previously truly mad, but has put that behind him now. His cousin Elizabeth recognized him after his return, but commented that he had changed. An enforced spell in the Faerie Veil as a prisoner of the Unseelie could explain almost anything, but *their* motives are then unclear. One theory is that Auberon was actually unable to save Ludwig from assassins, and instead *acquired* a replacement from some other universe, convincing him that he could make up for his past mistakes in that world by doing better in another.

Whatever the case, Ludwig is more focussed than students of our history would expect. (It may have helped that the composer Richard Wagner, a great distraction for our Ludwig, seems to have vanished in New Europa — something else about which Auberon might know something.) He is in good physical condition and sometimes proves very sharp-witted, and of course he has the status and resources of a king, but his friends and allies will always be around to protect him from personal involvement in violent adventures; that is not his job. He might possibly take a personal interest in PCs who display an especially romantic style of heroism, in which case he could prove an invaluable patron.

### 1.3.6 The Steam Lords and Their Foes

In New Europa, Great Britain especially has deep, if partly-hidden, divisions. The first country into the Industrial Revolution, in our history, 19th-century Britain was dominated by a sometimes uneasy mixture of traditional aristocratic landowners and newly-rich industrialists, who usually aspired to join the former group. In New Europa, one cabal is handling the situation slightly differently.

The so-called "Steam Lords" are a mixture of ambitious new money and old aristocratic families who invested in industrialization from the first, and who are now using their wealth and technological power to seize an ever-greater share of political power. Many have seats in the House of Lords, where they manipulate large factions through rhetoric, double-dealing, and political skill; the group as a whole also has a number of members of the House of Commons in their pocket. Their objectives are to merge industrial society with old-fashioned feudalism; their dream would be a Britain of great smoky factories, churning out goods to make them ever more wealthy, tended by a great cowed workforce of obedient industrial serfs.

Queen Victoria, largely withdrawn from public life since the death of her beloved husband Albert, takes little interest in government. The highly capable, flamboyant former Prime Minister Disraeli (see p. 00) is seen as the Steam Lord's chief political opponent; although a conservative himself, he has no taste for feudal oppression, and warns against the danger of a Britain divided into "Two Nations." The current Prime Minister, Gladstone (see p. 00), while by no means a Steam Lord dupe, seems preoccupied with other diplomatic concerns, and swayed by the advantage granted to the nation by technological power.

The other noted domestic opponent of the Steam Lords is Prince Albert Edward, alias "Bertie," the Prince of Wales and heir to the throne, a man who has come to recognize a manipulative power-grubber when he meets one. Unfortunately, Steam Lord-controlled newspapers have managed to play up rumors of Bertie's taste for the high life (he *does* enjoy

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good food, good wine, and good company), with the result that his mother refuses to allow him to exercise much real influence. However, faced with a real struggle, New Europa's Bertie seems to have acquired a little more determination and will than his counterpart in our history.

## 1.3.7 Great Nations and Empires

Being currently in the midst of its own version of the 19th Century, New Europa is dominated by the idea of *Imperialism*. That's a dirty word in our world today, but do remember that Victorian-era imperialists often espoused a serious set of personal ideals; in the romantic *Falkenstein* world, such high-mindedness can be an especially potent force. Which is not to say that struggles against arrogant would-be conquerors aren't a valid theme for games in the setting.

The world's geography is discussed in detail in the next chapter, but in brief, the dominant world-spanning powers are the *British Empire*, which uses unequalled sea-power and huge commercial clout to control possessions from India to the Caribbean, and the *French Second Empire*, whose Napoleon III is determined to expand further abroad while maintaining a powerful army at home for defense (and other purposes). *Spain*, once a super-power, has long been in decline, although it still has some influence in South America. *Prussia* is still limited to the one continent, but has global ambitions and long-term plans.

There are also several other great land-based powers. The *Austro-Hungarian Empire* occupies much of central Europe; despite its many internal problems, it has diplomatic influence and old dreams of glory. *The Ottoman Empire* controls much of the Middle East and the south-east corner of Europe, albeit sometimes in name only; its old combination of religious fervor and magickally-adept viziers may not keep "The Sick Man of New Europa" intact much longer, despite the efforts of foreign diplomats who fear the consequences of its collapse. *Russia* likes to think of itself as a sophisticated New European power with its own special character, but retains a feudal system of government, influenced by shadowy forest faeries and with a ruthless secret police force, while *China* is ruled by true Dragon Emperors, and remains a force to be reckoned with, despite the assaults of more technologically advanced powers.

The great nation-state that arose in this period of our history finds itself in a very different condition in the *Falkenstein* world, as the *United States of America* has been checked in its westward expansion by the shamanistic powers of the Indian *Twenty Nations Confederacy*. Nonetheless, its potential should not be underestimated. On the western edge of North America, the *Bear Flag Empire* has emerged as an eccentric but substantial power.

## 1.3.8 The First Compact

The Second Compact is named somewhat ironically, given the nature of and signatories to the First Compact. But both do, ultimately, serve the same purpose; saving humanity from the depredations of the Unseelie Court.

The First Compact was shaped in prehistory — allegedly around 10,000 B.C. — in the wake of the great "Nightfall War" between the Courts, when the Unseelie were visibly moving towards a policy of simple hunting and extermination of humans. It came to the attention of the Adversary that Auberon was on the verge of making an alliance with a major human nation (now long forgotten) on the shores of the Inner Sea (see p. 00). On his way to the signing of the treaty, Auberon was waylaid and delayed by a group of surviving Fomorian giants; meanwhile, the Adversary took Auberon's shape, seeking to hijack the alliance; a major human power bound to him by great oaths would have been a useful tool. He carved his true name (also now long-forgotten by mortals) and seal into the great stone slab on which the treaty was

inscribed. He had, however, been typically rash; only then did he actually read what he had signed.

Underneath a minor Glamour laid by Auberon, the treaty bound the signatory and his followers never to go to war with the human race. Auberon had choreographed the entire story, and now showed up to dissuade the screaming Adversary from physically destroying the treaty; after all, there were countless witnesses to his oath. Auberon then countersigned the treaty for show.

The Adversary sulked within the Faerie Veil for some millennia after that, giving Auberon and humanity a useful breathing-space, but eventually returned, determined to work around his oath. He can, after all, call Wild Hunts (see p. 00; these are specifically permitted by the First Compact — Auberon wanted to keep his options open) or arrange simple murders, so long as he and his minions refrain from open warfare. And he can always persuade human beings to destroy themselves, or perhaps even start a war against the faeries, who would be permitted to defend themselves. Nor does the Compact protect non-humans. The Unseelie are simply obliged to be more subtle than they sometimes enjoy.



## 2 THE KNOWN WORLD

### 2.1 New Europa

The natural epicenter of most *Castle Falkenstein* campaigns, the continent where the faerie folk first came to this Earth and where the two great Compacts were signed, and where the Industrial Revolution was born, Europe is the most highly-developed region of the globe. With the struggle between Seelie and Unseelie currently focussed on Germany, this is where many great plots will originate, even if they come to their climaxes elsewhere. European culture extends far beyond the nations on the edge of the Eurasian land-mass; exploration, colonization and imperialism have spread it to every other continent, and even the Ottoman Empire, originally a proudly Asian power, is defined as a part of the European system.

Incidentally, as the sidebar on p. 00 explains, "New Europa" is a loose term; however, it is as good as any for the region at the heart of most *Castle Falkenstein* games. This chapter will start at the center and work outwards.

#### 2.1.1 Bayern

A medium-sized German kingdom, known to English-speakers as Bavaria, Bayern is a pleasant land, rural enough to be pretty, developed enough to be a serious regional power in its own right. Most of its 4.5 million people live in small towns and villages scattered across the rolling hills and grasslands; there also seems to be a very substantial population of minor Seelie faeries, although they do not care to be counted. To the south, the country rises to the Alps, which have an exceptional number of dragons and several major dwarfholds (see p. 00) as well as assorted lesser Unseelie such as trolls.

The government is a monarchy, but with a national assembly with significant powers; the country is, of course, allied to the Second Compact, and currently at extremely uneasy peace with Prussia. Thanks to the development of Engine Magick (see p. 00), Bayern is currently considered one of the most advanced nations on Earth in some respects, although it cannot match the sheer established might of Great Britain, or the Unseelie-bolstered power of Prussia, while France and the United States are both larger and have broader technological bases.

The human population is mostly Catholic, well-educated (there are schools in almost every village, and several good universities), and stereotypically combines German hard work and sentimentality with a Central European friendliness and taste for the good life. Bayernese architecture tends to the fairy-tale picturesque, with white-plastered, wood-beamed cottages and rustic churches with ornate wood-carvings.

##### 2.1.1.1 Military Forces

Bayern's army is relatively small, of course, and can only hope to make up in dedication what it lacks in professional qualifications, although it can now muster numerous faerie units, and dwarf-made weapons are being rushed into service in an attempt to reinforce its capabilities. The "water" navy is negligible, consisting of a few Napoleonic-vintage frigates with added iron plates; however, Bayern can, of course, now lay claim to the world's first serious air force, which is referred to as a navy.

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### 2.1.1.2 Munchen

The capital of Bayern, located on the Isar River, is known as Munich to English speakers and often referred to as "Old Munchen" to signify its long-established cultural position. It is as picturesque as the smaller Bayernese towns, but in a grander way. This is largely thanks to the efforts of Ludwig I (see p. 00), who sponsored extensive building and rebuilding in a fashionable classical style; older buildings tend more to baroque flourishes and towering red brickwork, but the city's appearance as a whole is generally harmonious and attractive.

There are theaters, libraries, and countless beer-halls, restaurants, and coffee-houses, as well as a modern railway station that links the city to the rest of the world. (The new Bayernese passenger aeroliners mostly berth on the shores of a small lake just outside the city, where they can land to float if necessary.) There are also several palaces, mostly used for government work; the traditional city residence of the kings of Bayern is the *Residenz*, a Georgian-style building adjacent to the *Englischer Garten*, the largest of the city's several parks. The highly cosmopolitan city attracts tourists as well as diplomats.

Until recently, Bayern was, if not exactly a backwater, then a fairly minor player on the international stage, emerging from the shadow of the Holy Roman Empire to find itself surrounded by larger and more aggressive powers. See chapter 1 for an introduction to the all-too-exciting recent history of Bayern, the nature of its king, and its growing place in world affairs.

### 2.1.2 Prussia

The largest German state, with a human population of around 18 million, Prussia is a kingdom with open ambitions to rate as an empire. It occupies most of the densely-populated northern German plain, with mountains to the southwest; canals and rivers provide communications between its cities and the Inner Sea and Baltic.

Ever since the medieval days of aggressive expansion against the old pagan tribes of the north, Prussia has been prone to militarism, and its soldiers distinguished themselves in the Napoleonic wars, including at Waterloo. Building on this, the modern Prussian state now fields the largest army in Europe. But Prussians also see themselves as a thoughtful people, with an excellent system of education and a growing industrial base; turned to aggressive ends, this produces a sophisticated armaments industry which can create mobile "landfortresses" as well as advanced small arms. This assertive state finds itself boxed into the center of Europe by other great powers; it is perhaps not surprising that Chancellor Bismarck (see p. 00) has based his policy on the drive to break out of this trap and claim Prussia a place as a global power. The consequence is the current danger to the world.

The Prussians are not entirely a vicious people; they respect the military virtues of honor and courage, and can be good company in a back-slapping sort of way. However, their aristocrats are all too fond of flashy uniforms and military status, and see dueling as a fine hobby; indeed, a saber scar on the face is a fashion accessory and a status symbol in a Prussian university. Upper-class Prussian schools are always oriented to the production of officers, and are developing an increasingly brutal approach to discipline.



### 2.1.2.1 Military Forces

Needless to say, all this has made the Prussian army capable and determinedly efficient as well as large. Its only weakness is perhaps its "human chauvinist" recruitment policy; whereas every other European army can deploy flamboyant faerie cavalry and perfectionist dwarf artillerymen, the Prussians exclude such beings from their ranks. (On the other hand, their intelligence services receive extensive aid from devious and sinister Unseelie.) Prussian uniforms look dull at first glance, with a great deal more gray and less bright color, but they are always practical as well as smart in a low-key way. The landfortresses are classed as part of the artillery, *not* the cavalry; they may be mobile, but they require huge crews of technical experts to keep running, and are used to inflict maximum damage on the enemy, not for reconnaissance or skirmishing.

The Prussian Navy attempts to imitate the British, with well-armed, rugged battleships, but lacks the resources to mount a credible threat to any but its smallest neighbors. Bismarck has concentrated on establishing the country's power on land first, leaving the navy with paddlewheel-powered ironclads with primitive turrets. Prussia lacks a true airforce, but even before it met the threat of Bayernese aeroships, the army had recognized the usefulness of an airborne reconnaissance capability, and Prussia's Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin has combined experience gained as an observer in the American Civil War with technical skill to create a respectable force of steam-powered dirigibles.

### 2.1.2.2 Berlin

Located on the Spree River, the capital of Prussia is virtually the polar opposite of Old Munchen; a city of squat, ugly, almost brutalist architecture, punctuated with heroic statuary and the occasional baroquely decorated public building. Even the royal palace presents a fortress-like face to the world, although it is ornately decorated within. The most famous monument is the Brandenburg Gate, a neo-classical archway surmounted by a statue of Victory. The government is the largest source of employment in Berlin, and the stereotypical Berliner is a quiet, meticulous, humorless administrator.

Still, this would not be a German city if it did not have its share of beer-halls; in working-class districts, stolid artisans make up for the sweat of a day's labor, while those which serve a higher class of customer are the locations for numerous bragging contests and duels. Berliners are not soulless automatons; they have a fine opera house, and have produced a number of renowned composers and writers.

### 2.1.3 France

France has been one of the dominant powers in Europe since the reign of Charlemagne. For the past two hundred years, most of the continent's wars and alliances have consisted of every other power trying to keep France from taking over completely. Now, for the first time in centuries it is France which has emerged as the defender of the established order against an aggressive rising power. Can Gallic elan and the genius of French science keep Bismarck's gray legions at bay? To any Frenchman, the answer is obvious.

France has a population of 45 million people, putting it behind Russia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but well ahead of Prussia. She is the greatest agricultural producer in Europe, and the northern part of the country boasts an impressive industrial base. French banks, filled with the savings of millions of frugal peasants and bourgeois, finance railroad construction in Russia, America and Antillea.

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Prussia may have a bigger army, and Great Britain may be richer, but France is indisputably still the world leader in fashion and culture. English aristocrats and American millionaires buy their clothes in Paris, drink French wines and hang French art on their walls. The language of international society and diplomacy is still French.

French society is more tolerant and less stuffy than British, without the streak of coarseness found in German or American culture. The French pride themselves on being clever, sophisticated and stylish. Gentlemen still fight duels — journalists in particular are forever having to defend themselves against someone taking offense at a published remark. Demimondaines and adventuresses are popular celebrities, as are artists and great chefs.

### 2.1.3.1 Government

France is ruled by the Emperor Napoleon III, the nephew and self-appointed heir of Napoleon Bonaparte. Napoleon began as a penniless exile, won a seat in the French Assembly, got himself elected President, and proclaimed himself Emperor with widespread popular support.

Since then he has ruled France as a more or less enlightened autocrat. He has made France strong and prosperous, and the people are happy and relatively free (as long as they don't get any funny ideas about deposing the Emperor). As described on p. 00, the Emperor is a charming man who knows how to enjoy himself, and during his reign the rest of France has followed suit.

Perhaps Napoleon III's wisest (or luckiest) decision as Emperor has been his appointment of Jules Verne to the position of Minister of Science. Backed by the Emperor's deep pockets, Verne has supported a number of groundbreaking scientific and technological projects. Some proved to be boondoggles (like the absurd plan to dig a tunnel beneath the English Channel), but others have paid immense dividends. The most famous of these is the titanic Verne Cannon, a colossal gun capable of launching shells into orbit — or of shelling any point on Earth (see the sidebar). The Verne Cannon gives France a weapon which can offset the irresistible Prussian Army, and so far Bismarck has not risked a conflict.

Under Verne, France has regained its leading position in science, particularly in calculation engines, medicine, biology and engineering. French scientists and technicians can be found everywhere in the world, working on a variety of projects. Perhaps Minister Verne's most risky move has been to join with King Ludwig and other like-minded souls in the Second Compact. The might of French technology is certainly a powerful ally, but some of the Compact's goals mix poorly with Napoleon III's ambitions. For now, both France and the Compact want to contain the growing power of Bismarck's Prussia, but there may come a time when Monsieur Verne will have to make some hard choices between his position and his friends.

### 2.1.3.2 Paris

The capital of France is also the capital of global fashion and society. Paris has the best restaurants, the best artists, the best clothiers, and the prettiest showgirls in the world. With a party animal like Napoleon III on the throne, the good times never stop.

Though the Eiffel Tower is still just a sketch in Gustave Eiffel's notebook, Paris is starting to take on the form recognizable to visitors from our own world and time. The Emperor has put Baron Haussman in charge of making the

city a true showplace, and the Baron has undertaken a complete facelift for Paris. Broad new boulevards are being cut through the medieval warren of streets, with grand squares and plazas where the avenues meet. The result is one of the most beautiful and impressive cities of New Europa. (The Baron's reconstruction has also had the effect of making Paris easier to control in the event of a civil uprising. Napoleon III is not taking any chances.)

The heart of Paris is the Ile de la Cite, the original Gaulish settlement on an island in the Seine. Many of the city's oldest buildings are there, including Notre Dame cathedral. The Ile de la Cite is connected to the riverbanks by several bridges, the oldest of which is the Pont Neuf (the New Bridge).

On the northeast bank of the Seine, the Right Bank or Rive Droit, are most of the government buildings, the better hotels, and the Opera. The Louvre sprawls along the Right Bank for half a mile. As the Imperial palace, it is not open to casual tourists.

The southwest bank is the Left Bank or the Rive Gauche. It covers less area than the Right Bank, and much of it is taken up by the University of Paris and the surrounding student district. The Rive Gauche has become a haven for artists, musicians, intellectuals, anarchists and eccentrics. It is also the home of most of the city's demimondaines.

### **2.1.3.3 Military Forces**

France has a long and distinguished military tradition. Under Napoleon Bonaparte, French arms swept all before them. Napoleon III isn't the general his uncle was, but he has done a good job of maintaining France's armed forces.

The French Army is large and well-equipped, with some forty thousand men under arms. In their blue tunics and red trousers, they are a colorful sight on the battlefield. The army is divided into two separate forces, the Colonial Army and the Metropolitan Army. The Colonial Army sees service in France's overseas possessions, and includes the famous French Foreign Legion. It sees nearly constant action in small colonial wars, and attracts ambitious officers anxious to distinguish themselves by spreading civilization at bayonet point.

The Metropolitan Army is the main French fighting force, and is organized and equipped to take on a major European opponent. The officers of the Metropolitan Army look down on their Colonial brethren, claiming that conflicts in distant corners of the world are not real war. Promotion in the Metropolitan Army is based less on merit than on political maneuvering, social prominence and family connections.

France's navy is definitely the junior service. France cannot hope to compete with the British fleet, and doesn't bother trying. The French navy consists of a few ironclads capable of dominating Mediterranean waters, some cruisers to protect commerce and show the flag, and a large number of torpedo boats for coastal defense. French ships are fairly advanced — Science Minister Verne has had an influence — but the service is starved for men and money. Currently the French navy is experimenting with submersible craft, inspired by the amazing Nautilus of Captain Nemo.

### **2.1.4 Great Britain**

Currently the rulers of the greatest empire the world has ever known (see below, p. 00, for details of some of the areas it controls), birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, undefeated in war this century, Britain is a power to be reckoned with — and the British know it. Supremely self-confident, and notoriously prone to assuming their superiority over every

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other New European nation (let alone the rest of the world), they can afford to claim to maintain a tradition of tolerance and fair play

The dangers of complacency that all this breeds, and of the underlying social divisions produced by industrialization and imperial expansion, have not yet been acknowledged. Charles Dickens may tell his fellow-countrymen of the appalling lives of the urban poor, Mr. Disraeli may warn of the division of the country into two nations, and even the *Times* may thunder about the military incompetence that produced the Charge of the Light Brigade not so long since, but at heart, many of the British regard these as minor problems, easily resolved by a few well-intentioned gentlemen when the need arises.

Still and all, Britain *is* a great power, and formidable in most areas to which the 30 million or so Britons apply themselves. The British Isles (two large and many smaller islands off the north-west coast of Europe) are, for the most part, a pleasant land; although they lie as far north as Germany and much of Russia, they are warmed by the Gulf Stream which flows up from the tropics, making the weather mild (if changeable and damp, hence its status as an Englishman's favorite topic of conversation), and the rolling hills of England fertile and green.

Scotland and Wales are more mountainous, which is why the Celtic peoples held out there when the Anglo-Saxons arrived a thousand years ago; the Scots especially still grumble sometimes at being ruled from England, and some of them were in open revolt not much more than a century ago. But the Empire and the Industrial Revolution offered them a deal; Scots engineers proved themselves as useful as any dwarf (yes, the cliché has a basis in fact), Scots regiments distinguished themselves in war, and Scots administrators and adventurers found their fortunes across the globe. This century, Sir Walter Scott made Scotland fashionable, and the royal family took their holidays there; the British aristocracy still likes to head north to go shooting. Ireland is another question again; see the sidebar.

### 2.1.4.1 Government

Yet another hereditary monarchy with a strong elected Parliament (albeit also with a purely hereditary House of Lords wielding as much power as the elected members of the House of Commons), Britain has been working on resolving conflicts between crown and people for longer than most, and is proud of its completely unwritten freeform constitution. This had its last major revision earlier this century, when a series of blazingly controversial changes extended the vote beyond the property-owning classes, reformed away the old "rotten boroughs" (so that villages of two men and a dog no longer voted in an M.P., and big new industrial cities like Manchester actually got representation in Parliament).

The crown was never as strong as in some countries, and one king was actually deposed and executed long before the French Revolution, so a balance has been struck; this is much more of a constitutional monarchy, although the monarch not only has the right to be kept informed, but can make suggestions to the Prime Minister, and theoretically has the power of veto (although actually *using* it is recognized to be a dangerous idea).

Not that Queen Victoria uses even that much power. Since the death of her highly capable and beloved husband Prince Albert a few years ago, she has become something of a recluse, leaving something of a vacuum at the top of the system (and generating one of Britain's occasional, faint, outbursts of anti-monarchist grumbling). Worse, she has taken against her own son and heir, Prince Edward, encouraged by press smears with an ulterior motive (see p. 00). Meanwhile, the Steam Lords (p. 00, sidebar) are maneuvering for power, looking to make Britain into what could be a "steampunk dictatorship" in alliance with Prussia. Fortunately, both of Britain's current leading politicians, Gladstone (p. 00) and

Disraeli (p. 00), are not only highly capable, but are too honorable to fall in with the worst of these schemes, but the general feeling in British politics is that technological progress is an unqualified good thing, and the country is determined to maintain its power at whatever cost. Britain is a headache for the Second Compact; the Unselie are playing a subtle game there, but effectively nonetheless.

#### 2.1.4.2 London

The capital of the British Empire sees itself as the greatest city in the world, and the claim may have some justice. Sited in the south–east of the country, on the lowest bridgeable point on the River Thames, it's a port as well as an administrative and cultural center. A Prussian general was supposed to have muttered "What a place to plunder!" when he saw it a while ago, and true or not, the story confirms British suspicions about foreigners. London's buildings are a jumble of styles (though all but a very few of the oldest were burned down in the Great Fire in the 17th century), from the medieval Tower of London and Westminster Abbey, through the great dome of Wren's St. Paul's Cathedral, to the modern neo–Gothic Houses of Parliament. The Queen occupies the neo–classical Buckingham Palace. The mechanical marvel of Tower Bridge will not be built for some years yet (unless one of New Europa's technological geniuses creates up with something similar, sooner); London Bridge (the latest of many through history, and one of several road and rail bridges across the river these days) is a more conventional arched design. (The city also, incidentally, has several railways stations, along with a growing underground rail system that is becoming a model for the world.) There are also several great museums; the British Museum, on the north side of the city, has the archaeological discoveries, and also incorporates the great British Library, while Prince Albert sponsored the creation of a chain of museums dedicated to natural history, science, and art and design in Kensington, to the south–west.

This casual mixture of old and new actually makes for a remarkably pleasant feel, perhaps less grand in total than some continental cities, but full of interest. Even the most run–down working–class districts of the East End bustle with life. However, although, as a port more than a manufacturing town, London maybe has few huge factory chimneys belching out smoke, but the sheer number of coal–burning fires in private homes have transformed London fogs from occasional mild river–mists to too–frequent stinking yellow smogs. London's several large parks, along with its commercial and artistic activities (less dynamic than in France, but nonetheless rich) make it a tolerable place to live, but it has its flaws.

#### 2.1.4.3 Military Forces

As an island nation, Britain has long depended on its navy over its army for defense. At times in history, the army has even been disdained; today, it is a relatively small, professional body, whose main duties are defending the frontiers of the Empire and occasionally sending expeditionary forces to deal with problems wherever they arise, from China to the Crimea. Mostly clad in scarlet jackets, British troops are famously brave and generally capable, if perhaps bound by too many traditions. (At the worst, there is a divide between "high society" officers, who take guard duty in London but pull strings to avoid overseas postings, and lower–status, career–oriented "India" officers, who are despised for being so ungentlemanly as to know how to do their jobs well.) Elite guards regiments, rugged Scots Highlanders, colonial troops such as Sikhs and Gurkhas, and the occasional squadron of faerie cavalry (sometimes on winged horses), make for a varied line of battle.

The Royal Navy, on the other hand, is Britain's chief line of defense against invasion, as well as the guardian of communications with the Empire, and if it ever seems likely to be challenged by any foreign force — indeed, if any *two* foreign forces in conjunction would be able to defeat it — the government is expected to deal with the problem

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immediately. Most recently, the sight of crude experimental ironclads bouncing shells off each other's armor in the American Civil War was taken as an omen; the British response was the creation of the steam-powered, propeller-driven, heavily armed and armored *Dreadnought*, a class of battleships without equal on the modern oceans. Dreadnoughts are designed to be able to engage even Captain Nemo's legendary *Nautilus* (a possibility that has not yet been tested); with increasing numbers of submersible vessels in operation (lesser craft, too many of them French, as well as the *Nautilus*), and dirigibles and aeroships filling the skies, the Royal Navy will be paying close attention to the creation of specialized weapons to defend their craft from *all* directions.

### 2.1.5 The Austro–Hungarian Empire

A remnant of the old Holy Roman Empire, this collection of states centered on Austria is a mixture of old and new, progressive and fossilized. Its citizens include Germans, Poles, Ruthenians, Czechs, Slovaks, Slovenes, Serbs, Croats, and Italians. Ruled as an absolute monarchy by the amiable Emperor Franz Joseph, it seems a pleasant enough place, lacking Prussia's urge to conquest, but the Empire is built on a network of spies and secret police who track subversives with dedicated skill and struggle to control the ambitions of the Empire's various components for national independence. In addition, the Imperial diplomatic corps is proud of its long history, sustaining a fine tradition of devious intrigue.

However, the recent war with Prussia painfully exposed the decline of the Empire; its army was thoroughly outclassed, both technologically and tactically, and even after the victory of Königseig (p. 00), the Austrians recognized the realities of the situation and withdrew most of their claims to influence in Germany. However, they continue to meddle, probably unwisely, in the confused and dangerous politics of the Balkans.

The Empire is spread across the rolling grasslands of Central Europe, and extends as far as the Balkans and northern Italy. Its total population is around 48 million people — but this makes for less of an economic power base than the numbers might suggest, thanks to the relatively low state of technological development and the rebelliousness of several regions. (Hungary, which makes up a large part of the Empire, is notably turbulent.) Needless to say, those who thrive on chaos find it a promising place to work.

#### 2.1.5.1 Vienna

This capital city, on the right bank of the Danube, embodies the Empire's cosmopolitan charm; countless cozy restaurants and coffee-houses (a Viennese institution) are full of writers, artists, and students, and the grand Prater amusement park and the Vienna Woods are rightly recommended to tourists. The architecture is mostly Baroque, with the occasional Gothic inclusion such as the great St. Stephen's Cathedral; the Imperial palace, the Hofburg, incorporates buildings of a whole range of dates and styles. However, amongst all the bustle, the city is also full of intrigue, with spies and anarchists exchanging messages and plots in a dozen languages, and diplomats calculating how long the situation can last.

In fact, although Vienna is an ancient city and the musical capital of the world, it has only been the official capital of the Empire since 1867, and in the 1870s, it is going through a period of rapid growth; an energetic administration has torn down the old city walls to make way for a new street plan. Despite the conservatism of the Empire, Vienna is becoming a breeding-ground for new ideas — some good, some bad.

### 2.1.6 Russia

Russia has long been seen as an enigma by Europe; while the Russians themselves have often sought to take their place as a European power, the vast, remote, chilly forests and steppes of their country have seemed alternately mysterious and threatening to others. In the 19th century, Russia is asserting itself once again, driving its land empire eastwards as far as the Pacific, squabbling with its old enemy, Ottoman Turkey, and developing ambitions to the south that threaten British influence in India.

A nation of around 62 million human beings, Russia is an absolute monarchy; the Tsar sits at the top of an archaic feudal system, deploying spies and Cossack troops to assert his will against any real or imagined threat. (The infamous *Okhrana*, a secret police force of exceptional ruthlessness and deviousness, were not formed until 1881 in our history, when the Tsar of the time was assassinated, but their predecessors are already hard at work in the *Falkenstein* world.) However, beyond the cities and villages, wolves still howl among the trees, and *Leshye* spirits (see the sidebar) recognize no human authority.

Not surprisingly, this situation breeds a superstitious, sometimes xenophobic people, with a notorious tendency to melancholy alleviated by a heroic fondness for drink and an equal capacity for sentimentality. Russia may be poor and under-educated, but it is also huge, and prone to wild enthusiasm and dedication when it finds cause to fight. Russian ambition always worries its neighbors. Furthermore, some at least of the aristocracy and diplomatic corps not only travel abroad, but learn from their experiences; with the personal wealth granted by the feudal system, and a grim determination to raise their national status, they make dangerous opponents in games of international intrigue.

Internal opposition to the Russian government occasionally surfaces in the form of either violent anarchism or disorganized peasant uprisings (with the peasants often sentimentally convinced that the Tsar would be on their side if they could just drown out the lies of his scheming ministers); there is a more democratic reform movement of sorts, but it is pitifully small. Sophisticated European revolutionaries such as Karl Marx consider Russia far too archaic and undeveloped to manage a modern revolution just yet. PCs on secret missions to Russia may not face the most well-equipped or subtle opponents, but Tsarist authorities can certainly be brutally effective, and local revolutionaries may well be hardened and desperate.

#### 2.1.6.1 Russian Capitals

The old capital of Russia is Moscow, an inland port on the Moscow River, known as the "Holy Mother of the Russias." Moscow is centered on its *Kremlin*, or citadel, a medieval complex of palaces, churches, and offices. The city has long since recovered from the great fires deliberately started by Russian patriots when Napoleon captured the city; the heart of Russia can survive worse than that.

However, in 1703, in the middle of a war with Sweden, the ambitious Tsar Peter the Great dragged thousands of his people to a swampy site on the Neva River to found a new city, St. Petersburg. Building work continued even as the enemy were threatening the site, and Peter declared it the capital in 1712. He was a determined, intelligent (if obsessive and dangerous) man, and he created one of the most beautiful cities in Europe, which has also become Russia's greatest port, despite its being iced up for several months each year. Lying far north, the city experiences long nights in winter and bright "white nights" in summer. It still has one problem, however; the low-lying site is still prone to flooding.



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### 2.1.7 The Italies

Italy remains a patchwork of small states in the Castle Falkenstein timeline. France and Austria have been too worried about the threat of Prussian expansion to come into conflict over Italy, so the process of winning independence and unification has been slower.

There are four major players in the Italies. From south to north, they are the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (which controls Sicily, Naples and the foot of the Italian boot), The Papal States (controlling a strip running across the peninsula from Rome to Ravenna), the Kingdom of Sardinia (which includes Turin, Genoa and the island of Sardinia), and the Austrian domains (running from Milan to Venice). Of the four, only the Kingdom of Sardinia is really interested in unifying the peninsula. The others prefer to maintain the status quo.

Sardinia (the name is a misnomer — the island of Sardinia is poor and thinly populated; the kingdom's capital is Turin, in the province of Savoy on the mainland) is the main supporter of unification. Under its brilliant Prime Minister Cavour, Sardinia encourages rebel movements in the rest of Italy and strives to gain support from the Great Powers. While Napoleon III supports Italian unification, he is reluctant to offend Austria as long as Prussia is a threat. Prussia, however, has no hesitation, and in recent months Prussian influence in Sardinia has been increasing. If Bismarck can help Count Cavour and King Vittorio Emanuele unite the Italies by force, he can gain an ally wedged between France and Austria, and inch the world that much closer to a general war.

### 2.1.8 The Ottoman Empire

The Ottoman heartland is the mountainous region of Anatolia, although the capital, Istanbul, is sited just across the Bosphorus in Europe. The Turks theoretically rule an empire extending from Europe to Iraq, Arabia, and Africa, but the reality is less impressive.

The last and greatest conquering Muslim power, the Ottoman Turks came almost out of nowhere in the Middle Ages to conquer most of the Middle East, gain a foothold in Europe, and repeatedly threaten the Christian world. Driven back from the gates of Vienna, they eventually went into decline, becoming lost in dreams of past glory and refusing to adopt the scientific and military innovations that enabled Europe to dominate the world. However, the sheer size, wealth, and religious dedication of their Empire enabled them to ignore their own decline for many years; only in the present century has Turkey's status as "the Sick Man of New Europa" become painfully evident, as province after province breaks away, either gaining full independence or falling into the hands of local governors who simply ignore commands from the capital.

Now, the Ottoman Empire is propped up by an agreement between several European powers, none of whom want to see it disintegrate if that would mean much of it falling into the hands of other rivals. For example, when Russia found an excuse to assail Turkey, Britain and France allied and fought the Crimean War to check Russian ambitions. Currently, however, Prussia is taking a dangerous interest in Turkey.

This had not previously seemed a great risk; Bismarck was once heard to say publicly that he "never even bothered to open the mailbag from Constantinople." But the Prussians have also dreamed of *Drang nach Osten*, the "Trend to the East," and with his conquests in Germany halted by the Second Compact, the Iron Chancellor (encouraged, no doubt, by his Unseelie allies) appears to be looking further afield. Regrettably, the Turks are susceptible to Prussian influence.

They are a warlike people, and even their most progressive "Westernizers" dream of resurrecting Ottoman glory by adopting modern, Western military skills — and they judge the Prussians to be the most dedicated and impressive source of advanced military ideas. Moreover, the Prussians are helping with plans for the creation of a railway network, to bind the Ottoman Empire closer together (and to enhance the mobility of its reformed army).

### 2.1.8.1 Government

The Ottoman Empire is often called "Medieval" by Europeans. It represents what might be termed an "Oriental Despotism"; The Sultan rules with absolute authority, through a court of ritualistic formality. He does not have Lords and Barons; he has Slaves and Ministers. But these Sultans have, for generations, been an unstable family. They have ruled through the Viziers, the chief of whom at least is always a formidable and sinister sorcerer. Even today, they also take the advice of Court Astrologers.

They also have a formidable secret police force.

Europeans refer to the Ottoman Court or Government as the "Sublime Porte." This is a translation of the Turks' own name for the central component of government, made up of the office of the Grand Vizier (and his magickal cabal, the "Diwan of the Golden Road"), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Great *Diwan*, or Council of State.

In ancient times, Turkish tribal chiefs would hold audiences in the entrance of their tents; their descendants use a more spectacular gate (or *Portal*). This is located in the innermost, most exclusive courtyard of the Topkapi Palace, and is marked by two stone pillars, excavated somewhere in southern Arabia during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, and alleged to have been created by Solomon himself. The Ottomans claim that they were a gift from Solomon to the Queen of Sheba, and that they were found in her ancient palace. Arabian texts speak of them as both the "Gates of Paradise" and the "Gates of the Djinn."

(No—one in the West knows what these terms mean, if anything, but some Faeries suggest that the pillars might enable a sorcerer to open a two—way gate to the Faerie Veil. While it might be interesting for a foolhardy scholar to travel through such a gate, the Sultans may value them for another reason. Solomon's lore is primarily concerned with the binding and controlling of Djinn; it is unlikely that any device associated with him would permit any uncontrolled Faerie access to our world. More likely, Djinn can be *summoned* through the Sublime Porte, and in the process, bound to the will of the summoner.)

With poor internal communications, the Empire deputizes authority to a hierarchy of governors and minions, the best—known of whom are the *Pashas*. "Pasha" is a rank of state, which may be held by an army general, a fleet admiral, or a civilian governor. The title is retained as the holder moves between offices, and usually appended at the end of the holder's name for the rest of his life; for example, the present Grand Vizier is Mahmud Nedim Pasha.

### 2.1.8.2 Military Forces

Once, Ottoman military power was based on the Janissaries, fanatical slave—soldiers, but they grew arrogant, bullied the sultans, and were eventually suppressed and (supposedly) destroyed early in the 19th Century. Since then, the Ottomans have attempted to create a modern, European—style army, with limited success. They purchase European guns and bayonets and uniforms, and employ European drill—sergeants and advisors, but they are applying all of this to recruits from the

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poorest hill-farms of Asia, and often place the resulting force under the command of Turks who despised "foreign ways." The new Prussian contingent in Constantinople may succeed where others have failed, but they face a large task.

The Ottomans depend heavily on hordes of undrilled irregulars, the *bashi-bazouks*. Fighting for loot rather than pay, these backwoods regiments — barely more than over-sized bandit gangs — are often responsible for the brutal massacres and wholesale pillaging that accompany every repression of revolt or border skirmish in and around the Empire. (Not that the regulars are saints.) Unfortunately, this is yet another venerated Ottoman tradition, and the Sublime Porte is only slowly coming to realize the horror that it induces in the rest of the world. For cavalry, they rely on a truly medieval, feudal levy, the *sipahis*. These are wild and dedicated warriors, but disdainful of discipline, little more than *bashi-bazouks* on horseback. The sultan may dream of importing Prussian armored steam vehicles, but fortunately for all concerned, his Prussian friends are too wise and cautious to release their sophisticated technology to untrained and unpredictable allies.

One arm of the Ottoman forces that is certainly formidable is the artillery. The Turks have an ancient fondness for gigantic siege-guns, and a well-armed and enthusiastic artillery corps provided the then Sultan with great assistance in the annihilation of the Janissaries. Under a commander who always adopts the nickname of "Black Hell," this body uses its assorted weapons enthusiastically. It occasionally works with sorcerers, sometimes even the supreme wizards of the Empire, the Grand Vizier and his faction, a small, very powerful band who guard their secrets jealously. This group may be terrifying, or it may be absent, indisposed, or confused. (The sieges of Vienna failed partly because, on each occasion, a single, over-confident Grand Vizier had his attempts to control the local weather countered and reversed by dedicated bands of less potent but more co-operative Europeans.)

As to the Ottoman Navy; the current Sultan is fond of the sight of iron-clad battleships in full steam (despite his tendency to sea-sickness), and when he toured New Europa, the British shrewdly allowed him to review their own Fleet. As a result, he ordered yet more craft (which Turkey cannot afford) from British shipyards. Unfortunately for him, Turkey lacks competent crewmen. The great ironclads sit rusting in harbor, or lurch across the Black Sea, forever having to return to port for repairs.

### 2.1.8.3 Istanbul

The city which was founded as Byzantium, and which became the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire as Constantinople, sits on the Bosphorus, the narrow straits that separate Europe from Asia. It was famously captured by the Ottomans in 1453, renamed once again as Istanbul, and made the capital of their growing empire.

It is, in a way, not one city but two, or many. The old walled Byzantium of the Greeks and Constantinople of the Romans sits on the promontory known as *Seraglio Point*; this part, the heart of Ottoman power, is properly called *Stamboul*. It is built on seven hills, many of them crowned with magnificent mosques, and contains the Topkapi, the old palace of the sultans. (Recently, however, the sultans have tired of the cramped confines of Stamboul, and have built new palaces for themselves along both sides of the Bosphorus. The most spectacular of these is the Dolmabache Palace, north of the city's core.) Across the *Golden Horn*, one of the world's finest deep-water harbors, lies *Pera*, a more recent development. Around all this, suburbs are springing up, especially along the coastline. The Turks sometimes speak of the entire metropolis as "Constantinople," but usually prefer their own name for it. (Classically-educated Europeans may still casually use the old name; patriotic Greeks, who regard it as a lost symbol of national glory, may flatly refuse to use the Turkish word.)

Pera is where foreign embassies and trading-houses are located. The Turks refer to it as the "Giaour City," "Giaour" being a contemptuous term for Christians. In fact, it has much of the air of a European city, magically transported to the East. Even the main avenue is named in French — the *Grand Rue de Pera* — and one may purchase English or French newspapers here. Turks often visit the place to buy European manufactures and be shocked by foreign ways. However, Pera is still cramped and grimy, and its back-streets may well have more cut-throats and villains than those of Stamboul; the pickings are richer, and to make matters worse, the legal confusion of the place gives many a ruffian escape from justice. The *Capitulations*, agreements by which foreign embassies are immune to some Ottoman laws, have been greatly abused. There is a thriving trade in forged documents, and many a rogue will claim to be "French" or "British" when in truth he is a Greek or Armenian who worked for a short while as an embassy gardener. Like any trading-town, Pera is also a haunt of confidence-tricksters and fallen women.

Istanbul is further subdivided into quarters. The Ottomans traditionally permit subject-peoples a degree of self-government; the *millets*, or religious groups, especially make clear distinctions among themselves. Thus, there is an Armenian Quarter, a Jewish Quarter, a Greek Quarter, and so on. Different races speak different languages, and all too often fear and distrust each other. An ill-managed provincial quarter, even in Pera, may become far dirtier and more dangerous than Stamboul-town, which lies close under the eye of the Sultan's court.

Istanbul seems a truly medieval city, and this includes its sanitation. There are few sewers, and the place would surely have choked on its own filth by now, were it not built on sloping ground above a sea with a fast current. The houses are irregular and shabby; even the best are often built of wood and plaster. Fire is a terrible danger. Nonetheless, it is a uniquely attractive place, especially when seen from a distance, such as a ship arriving in its harbors.

## 2.2 The World Beyond

Though Europe is the richest and most advanced region, the world beyond is filled with all manner of marvels. Across the Atlantean Ocean lies America, home of the booming nations of Texas, California and the United States. South of America is the continent of Antillea, where the mighty Inca Empire broods in the Andes mountains and the Empire of Brazil vies with the Argentine for predominance. Across the Mediterranean from Europe lies Africa, now being eyed hungrily by ambitious empire-builders. To the east Asia stretches away to the realms of the Dragon Emperors of China and Japan. Like the nations of New Europa, many places around the world are much like their equivalents in our own history, and many more are wildly different.

### 2.2.1 The United States of America

The United States is a fast-growing industrial power, poised to overtake Great Britain and Prussia in manufacturing output. A big, rich country with an active and inventive population, the U.S.A. seems likely to become one of the world's leading nations by the start of the next century.

The United States has a population of some 35 million, growing by leaps and bounds as immigrants crowd into the big cities. The bulk of the inhabitants are still old Americans of British descent, but there are large German and Irish minorities. Italians and Slavs are the latest arrivals. Meanwhile in the South, a third of the people are black, recently liberated from slavery but still trapped by poverty and a desperate lack of education.

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The country is large, stretching from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico and from the Atlantic to the Mississippi. For a time after the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 the United States claimed everything up to the Rockies, but after a group of Indian shamans obliterated the city of St. Louis by sorcery in 1830, the Americans ceded everything to the west to the Twenty Nations Confederation and the Republic of Texas.

There are 28 states in the United States: Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New Brunswick, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Ottawa, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin. The capital city is Washington, located in the District of Columbia between Virginia and Maryland.

The government of the United States is a representative democracy, with each state represented by two Senators and a number of Congressmen based on population. The President is chosen by popular election. By modern standards, the Federal government is very weak. Its chief source of income is customs duties and its largest single department is the Post Office. To most citizens, local and state government is far more important than whatever goes on in Washington.

Ulysses S. Grant is the current President of the United States. President Grant is a well-meaning man and a good military commander, but his administration is riddled with corruption. The President seems unable or unwilling to stop the Robber Baron tycoons from enriching themselves at public expense and writing legislation to suit themselves. Former President Abraham Lincoln remains a vigorous presence in American politics, and his leadership has made the process of Reconstruction remarkably swift and amicable, while preventing Southern political leaders from imposing laws to disenfranchise the newly-freed blacks.

One very vigorous government department is the army. The United States finished the Civil War with the largest and most advanced army in the Western Hemisphere, perhaps even in the world. Most of the troops have gone back to civilian life, but the fifty thousand men still under arms are almost all experienced veterans, armed with some of the most devastating weapons American inventors can create. By contrast, the Navy has settled into a decline since the end of the war, scrapping dozens of ships and letting the rest rot for lack of maintenance. Aside from a few ironclad monitors, the bulk of the Navy is unchanged from the days of John Paul Jones.

Sorcery in the United States is strictly controlled. The only Sorcerous Order permitted by law is the Freemasons (though members of the Church-sponsored Orders of Knights Templars and St. Boniface are tolerated). The result is that the United States has relatively few sorcerers, and lags behind most New European nations in the Magickal arts.

As if in compensation, American inventors are perhaps the best in the world. Men who would be treated as dangerous Mad Scientists elsewhere are minor popular heroes in the United States. Any invention is considered an accomplishment, no matter what it does. Americans love the latest gadgets, and nearly every home has some kind of weird mechanical household appliance. In the United States, inventors often become vastly rich, joining the ranks of the Robber Barons. Most stop inventing once they make a fortune, but some use their new wealth to create ever more fantastic devices.

Traditionally the United States has tried to remain aloof in international politics. The Monroe Doctrine holds that European meddling in the Western Hemisphere will always meet opposition from the United States, but the corollary is that America has no interest in European affairs. That situation is changing, for a number of reasons. With the path to westward expansion blocked by the Twenty Nations, the United States has begun seeking allies in the hope of crushing the Indians. Commercial ties have created a good relationship between American Robber Barons and British Steam

Lords, and increasingly Prussia has been building up an alliance with American leaders who want to bring the whole continent under one flag.

### 2.2.2 The Republic of Texas

Texas became independent in 1836, when Sam Houston defeated the Mexicans under Santa Anna. Since then, President Houston has guided his nation along a path which combines the best features of the Indian nations and the English and Spanish heritage of the white settlers. The result is a vibrant, brawling republic stretching from Orleans to the Colorado river. Texas has four million inhabitants, a mix of Cherokee Indians, Comanches, settlers from the United States, descendants of Spanish settlers, black freedmen and immigrants from Germany and Bohemia. The chief cities are Houston, Galveston, Fort Worth and San Antonio. Fort Worth is the capital, though President Houston still spends as much time as possible at his home in Washington-on-the-Brazos.

The Texan economy is currently booming. During the Civil War, Texas profited handsomely as a neutral selling supplies to the Confederacy, and picked up a lot of the Southern foreign trade halted by the Union blockade. The basis of the Texan economy is beef. Cattle barons own huge spreads, some bigger than entire European nations. Texan beef winds up on dinner tables all over America, and even finds its way across the Atlantean aboard vane clippers packed with ice. Second to the beef trade but growing fast is the petroleum business. While so far the Steam Age has been fueled by coal, oil is gaining popularity as a fuel, especially for craft like steam automotives and steam zeppelins, as it packs more energy into less weight than coal. The landscape of East Texas is studded with all kinds of patent oil-drilling devices, ranging from simple wooden derricks to complicated mobile steam-powered drill machines.

Texas maintains a relatively powerful army, with ten thousand men under arms. The Texan army contains a great many veterans of the Civil War, and ongoing troubles with Comanches and Apaches in the far west have kept the Texans in fighting trim. Texas also has a small navy, mostly consisting of former United States ships purchased after the Civil War. Texas serves an important role in American politics. As an ally of the Twenty Nations and the guarantor of Orleans's neutrality, Texas is a counterweight to the power of the United States. But as a society built on the New European model that is nevertheless friendly with the Indian nations, Texas is proof that the two civilizations do not have to be enemies.

### 2.2.3 The Twenty Nations

The Twenty Nations Confederation barely rates as a nation at all by European standards; even if it was recognized, it consists of a population of little more than a million people, many of them nomadic herders. However, it successfully holds off the power of the United States, and makes quiet alliances with local and world powers. The basis for this is powerful traditional magick (mostly defensive), and the support of even more powerful local supernatural beings.

The Confederation was inspired by the ideas of the Shawnee chieftain Tecumseh, who worked to organize Indian resistance to White expansion at the beginning of the 19th century, and assisted in its early organization by Sam Houston, before he became president of Texas. It has now grown beyond twenty tribes, but which retains its early name; it includes Iroquois, Cherokee, Cheyenne, Sioux, and Arapaho, among many others, all governed by a Council of Chiefs. It can muster the sort of raw aggressive power that destroyed St. Louis if it needs to, but its main defense is the "Spirit Wall," maintained by an unending dance of shamans at the meeting-place of its council. Any outsiders entering its territory are intercepted by powerful intangible beings, sooner or later; large and aggressive groups are noticed more quickly. The intruders are tested in some way, often through dreams; if the spirits judge that they are hostile, they are

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usually turned around, rendered confused so that they wander back off the Twenty Nations' land (though occasionally, intruders simply *disappear*).

Recently, the Confederation has come to accept that the Spirit Wall cannot hold the border forever, and certainly, the old ways *are* going to change, one way or another. As a result, the governing Council has been looking to extend its current informal alliances with Orleans and the Republic of Texas, and to formulate plans for adapting to the changing world; this has even included a tentative approach to Bayern and the Second Compact.

### 2.2.4 The Bear Flag Empire

On the western coast of America is the Bear Flag Empire of California. It stretches from the Canadian border to the southern tip of Baja California, and occupies what would otherwise be the States of Washington, Oregon, California and Nevada, and the entire Baja peninsula. Though it has only a million people, California is possibly the richest nation on Earth, thanks to huge deposits of gold and silver.

Settlers from the United States began trickling into California in the 1840s, when the region was still controlled by Mexico. They were mostly farmers and immigrants, seeking good land. During the Texas–Mexico war of 1846, the Californians declared their independence, under President John Fremont. Then in 1848, everything changed. Gold was discovered near Sacramento, and the trickle of settlers turned into a tidal wave of gold–hungry prospectors. California grew populous, incredibly rich, and amazingly corrupt. The government of President Fremont became an oligarchy of business leaders.

The centerpiece of the Bear Flag Empire is the city of San Francisco, with nearly a quarter of the population and all the industry of the nation. The busy port is full of sailing ships, vane clippers, and steamships from around the world. San Francisco is defended by the bulk of California's armed forces, including the amazing *Cortador Madera*, a huge magickal electric cannon.

California's government may well be the oddest in America, if not the world. The Emperor of the Bear Flag Empire is Norton I, who proclaimed himself Emperor when he was a penniless vagabond. He might have remained nothing but a local crackpot in San Francisco, save for the assassination of President Fremont in 1863. Because none of the Cabinet could agree on which was to take over, they accepted the suggestion of newspaperman Samuel Clemens to make Joshua Norton President. The harmless lunatic Norton would be a figurehead while the cabinet cabal ran things behind the scenes. But Fate had other ideas. When agents of the U.S. Secret Service tried to wipe out the entire leadership of California at a military review, Norton survived due to the quick action of Kit Carson, the commander of the Republic's army.

With the cabal out of the way, Norton began to rule as a monarch, and altered the name and constitution of California to fit. He has proved himself a surprisingly effective leader, and has been able to make all of California's quarrelsome factions unite to keep their nation strong and independent. Somehow Norton's supreme self–confidence allows him to win over Vigilante bands, Indian tribes, Chinese tongs, business leaders and local political bosses.

Of course, he is still as eccentric as the day is long — Norton conducts most of the business of government while sitting on park benches, strolling about the city, or playing chess at the Mechanics Institute. Sometimes the Emperor disappears for days. He wears a ceremonial uniform so gaudy one can hardly look at him without squinting. Its a completely crazy

way to run an Empire — but it works.

The Bear Flag Empire is allied with Texas, as the two nations have many of the same concerns — defense against Mexico, stopping the Masons of the United States from annexing the continent, and trying to keep relations between whites and Indians from blowing up into war. California also has good ties with China, as Norton's vigorous efforts on behalf of Chinese immigrants have won the favor of the Dragon Emperor. Recently California has signed an alliance with Bayern, and cooperation between the Bear Flag Empire and the Second Compact is likely.

### 2.2.5 Mexico

Since Cortez, his *conquistadores* and Templar supporters, and their local allies, defeated the Aztecs in 1519, Mexico has developed as a mixed Spanish and native culture. It remained the main source of wealth for the Spanish Empire until Napoleon conquered Spain and drove its royal family into exile; without support from Europe, the loyal Viceroy was forced to acknowledge the independence movement under Agustín de Iturbide. The country was proclaimed independent in 1821. However, when Iturbide declared himself Emperor of Mexico the next year, the Mexicans fell into civil war.

A series of revolts, new constitutions, and assassinations followed over the next thirty years, with various factions receiving more or less overt aid from foreign powers who wanted access to Mexico's resources. Meanwhile, Spain made attempts to re-conquer its former possession, but was driven off by General Santa Anna. A hero for this, Santa Anna became president, but fell in and out of favor as Mexico suffered victory and defeat in various wars, losing Texas and California along the way.

In 1862, during the American Civil War, the European powers grew impatient with Mexico's instability, which made it hard to reclaim the debts Mexico owed, and installed the Austrian Emperor's younger brother Maximilian as Emperor of Mexico, backed by French troops. However, by 1864, the French called their troops home to face the threat of Prussia, and the United States, now at peace, made it clear that they disliked European intervention on "their" continent. Maximilian's power-base, never strong among Mexicans (whose only point of agreement seemed to be that they did not wish to be ruled from abroad), now collapsed; he refused to flee, and was captured and executed in 1867.

In the 1870s, Mexico has a population of some 10 million, and is organized as a federal republic, with a constitution modeled on that of the U.S.A., but with a markedly stronger president. The country is currently at peace, and many Mexicans take an optimistic view of the future, despite the devastation caused by years of civil war, but New European visitors may be viewed with suspicion; most great European nations (aside from Spain) are viewed as meddling enemies, and Texans are all too proud of escaping Mexican rule. Orleans and, these days, Spain are viewed as allies, however.

### 2.2.6 The Empire of Brasil

The Empire of Brasil is the largest country in Antillea, covering more than a third of the continent. Brasil was controlled by Portugal rather than Spain during the colonial era, so its language is Portuguese. The Empire's population is about 11 million.

When Napoleon's armies overran Spain and Portugal, the Portuguese royal family withdrew to their rich colony of Brasil. In 1822 Portugal was liberated, but the heir to the throne, Prince Pedro, was reluctant to return. He declared Brasil independent and proclaimed himself Emperor.



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Pedro I made his country independent; keeping it united was the hard part. Uruguay broke free in 1828, and revolts raged for more than a decade. In 1831 Pedro I gave up and returned to Portugal. His five-year-old son succeeded him as Emperor of Brasil.

For the next decade, a series of Regents governed the country on behalf of the boy Pedro II. They generally did a poor job, and in 1840 the Emperor took over at the age of 14. The boy-Emperor had a will of steel. In the first decade of his reign, Dom Pedro ended the unrest and united his realm, and has made it peaceful and powerful. In person, Pedro II is an impressive man, tall and bearded. He is interested in science, and corresponds with many of the world's leading inventors and scientists. Though the Second Compact has not yet approached him, the Emperor Pedro would be a natural ally.

Though Brasil has an elected Senate, most real power lies with the Emperor himself and his Council of Ministers. Second only in importance to the Emperor is the Visconde do Rio Branco, President of the Council of Ministers — the Prime Minister of Brasil. The Visconde is a brilliant diplomat, and one of the Emperor's most trusted advisors on foreign affairs. He is a staunch Conservative who believes strongly in Imperial rule and favors slow reform.

The country consists of two very different sections. The coastal strip has jungle along the coast, and grasslands further inland. The highlands which parallel the coast are rich in minerals. The rest of Brasil is the basin of the Amazon river. The river basin is the largest rainforest in the world, and most of it is unexplored.

The wealth of Brasil lies in its vast natural resources — coffee, cotton, tobacco, emeralds and cattle. But by far the most important product is rubber. The Steam Age needs rubber for automotive tires, gaskets, belts, and balloon envelopes, and all of that rubber must come from the sap of trees in the Amazon. The city of Manaus, the center of the rubber trade, is much like San Francisco during the Gold Rush. Incredible fortunes are made overnight. But the cost of the rubber boom comes in lives. The treatment of Indians and rubber-tappers in the Amazon is incredibly brutal. It is estimated that each ton of rubber costs a man's life.

Rio de Janeiro is the capital city of Brasil and its greatest metropolis. It stands on one of the most beautiful sites in the world, on the southern shore of Guanabara Bay. The bay is a superb natural harbor ten miles across, guarded by mountains on the seaward side. The distinctive Sugar Loaf Mountain stands at the entrance to the bay, and overlooks the city. Rio has a population of more than a quarter-million people, and is the center of business and culture for the Empire of Brasil.

Brasil is the greatest military power in Antillea. With an army of almost a hundred thousand men, plus British-built ironclad warships, Brasil is certainly the equal of any power in the New World. Most recently Brasil, Argentina and Uruguay ended a long and incredibly bloody war against Paraguay which left that country in ruins.

### 2.2.7 The Inca Empire

The Incan Empire is called *Tahuantinsuyu* by its people. It extends along the western coast of Antillea, from Gran Colombia clear down to Chile. It has over seven million inhabitants, making it the equal of many New European powers.

The land is remarkable for its altitude — nearly all the territory is a thousand feet or more above sea level. With the possible exception of Tibet, the Andean plateau is the most heavily populated mountain region in the world. The greatest city by far is Cuzco, the capital, with a million inhabitants.

The ruling Inca clan uses Quechua as the court language, and most inhabitants of the empire speak that tongue in addition to their native dialect. The people of the empire are pure-blooded Indians; no immigration is allowed. The Inca clan has controlled their empire for thousands of years. They claim to be descended from godlike beings that live among the stars. To help humanity escape its primitive state, the sky beings chose two of their number and set them down on Earth. This pair was the ancestors of the Inca clan. The two children of the heavens instructed humans in all the arts of civilization. Manco Capac, the first Inca Emperor, built the city of Cuzco in a single night, using magic and superscience. The Inca and their subjects gradually conquered the other tribes of the region, using their amazing flying pyramids and Sun-Fire projectors.

In 1532, a Spanish expedition under Francisco Pizarro entered the territory of the Inca. Only one survivor returned to Panama. Since that time the Inca have guarded their borders with ceaseless vigilance.

Government of the Empire is held entirely by the Inca clan. At the top, of course, is the Sapa Inca himself, the lord of the Andes and Son of the Sun. The Sapa Inca, known generally as just "the" Inca, is the absolute ruler of his domain. He is assisted by a Council of the Realm, but the ultimate decision-making power lies with him. The mummies of previous rulers are preserved in their royal residences, with servants and attendants. By means of sorcery the current Inca can commune with his predecessors and get their advice.

The Emperor Viracocha is a weak ruler, devoted to study and pleasure. In his youth he was a vigorous monarch, but as he enters his second century he has withdrawn, and now leaves most of the running of his empire to the bureaucrats and the Council of the Realm.

To protect the Son of the Sun, there is an Imperial Guard, armed with the dreaded Sun-Fire weapons, which emit a dazzling beam of light which destroys whatever it touches. The standing army is nearly as impressive. The Incan Empire has fifty thousand men under arms. They are armed with a variety of weapons: slings throwing explosive grenades, fire-sprayers, blowguns with poison darts, spears, bows, and maces.

The technology of the Incas is astounding. Many of their devices combine magickal and super-scientific elements. Crystals and jewels are a key part of Inca science, used in power generation, Sun-Fire weapons and healing. Medical knowledge is advanced, and allowed the Inca to survive the diseases which decimated other Antillean cultures after Columbus.

In fact, while much of the Empire operates at apparent and actual TL0 or 1, the Incas have limited access to TL10 and even TL12 technology. The source of energy for many of the most astounding machines is fusion power, known as "Blood of the Sun." Using this to power antigravity machines, they can raise objects of any size, as their flying Sky Pyramids demonstrate (see the sidebar, p. 00); Sun-Fire weapons are TL8 lasers with TL10 power cells. (See *GURPS Ultra-Tech* for information on such weapons; Imperial Guard personal weapons are the equivalent of laser rifles. Note that sufficiently advanced weaponry can inflict True Death on faeries.) A surprising lack is the complete absence of the wheel among the Incas. Despite their splendid road system, they do not use wagons or any kind of wheeled vehicles. (But after all, a civilization with anti-gravity technology hardly *needs* the wheel.) For a sense of the sort of setting brave and lucky visitors might experience, see *GURPS New Sun*.

The rest of the world knows little about the Incas, dismissing most of what it hears as garbled accounts of impressive but unrefined sorcery. Dragons avoid the Andes, and deny all knowledge of the origins of Inca civilization; Auberon and

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other ancient faeries likewise plead ignorance of the matter (and worryingly, never smile while doing so). Attempts by the White Lodge and the Temple of Ra, who *both* like to think that they have something in common with the Incas, to establish a relationship, are slapped down with casual extremity.

### 2.2.8 China

China is still the biggest and most populous nation on Earth, and has a complex and highly-developed civilization tracing its history back some four thousand years. For most of that time, China has been the most advanced and powerful nation in the world, but in the past century it has had a series of rude awakenings.

The inhabitants of New Europa, once dismissed as mere ghost-colored barbarians, have made amazingly rapid progress in science and industry. Armed with devilish inventions like breech-loading guns and steam ironclads they have invaded the waters of Asia, seizing islands and ports as colonies, and even daring to make war upon the Middle Kingdom itself! So far China has remained strong enough to keep the foreigners at bay, though at the cost of some concessions. After the Opium War in 1851 the Dragon Emperor permitted the British to occupy and claim an otherwise worthless fishing village called Hong Kong. British, American and French merchants have trading privileges at the Treaty Ports of Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo and Shanghai.

One effect of this forcible end to China's isolation has been that a large number of Chinese have left their homeland in search of a better life abroad. Many cities in the British Empire have a small but vigorous Chinese populations, and London itself has a substantial number of Chinese inhabitants in the Limehouse district. In America most of the Chinese are concentrated in the Empire of California, though New York has a growing Chinatown of its own. Though most emigrants are hardworking souls who only want a better life, a few criminal masterminds and evil sorcerers have found concealment in Chinese communities abroad.

China has a population of some 300 million, or about as many as all the Great Powers of Europe combined. The bulk of the people live in small farming villages, but China still supports several great cities, including Peking (the capital), Chunking, Nanking, and the port cities already mentioned. The empire has extensive handcraft industries, but so far has not adopted New European-style mechanized industry.

Where once China was by far the most technologically advanced nation on Earth, it now has fallen behind the barbarians. China's domestic technology is TL4, with a scattering of imported TL5 items. There are a few inventors in China, who have come up with some fantastic devices mixing existing Chinese technology with advanced creations of their own devising. (Chinese inventors seem best at creating chemical formulations and explosives, reflecting the long Chinese alchemical tradition.)

If China lags in technology it remains a land of highly advanced sorcery. Drawing on millennia of tradition, with lore learned from Dragons, Chinese sorcery is the equal of any. The Dragon Emperor himself is expected to be at least a competent magician, and it is thought that Chinese Imperial sorcery is one of the things which keeps China from collapsing altogether. Unfortunately, there are at least as many magicians in China serving rebel groups, criminal masterminds, or their own ambition.

At present, China is suffering from domestic unrest and foreign aggression, which unfortunately only feed on each other — foreign influence causes popular unrest, which makes the foreigners bring in more soldiers to keep order, which

makes the people more rebellious . . . All this puts a severe strain on the ability of the Dragon Throne to govern the country. Lawlessness and banditry are a growing problem. Secret societies are flourishing. The Taiping Rebellion of 1848–1864 was only suppress

ed with foreign help.

Many of the Chinese secret societies and rebel groups are adept at the arts of unarmed combat. Often they combine martial arts training with sorcerous lore, enabling their adepts to perform seemingly impossible feats of strength and dexterity. (Such adepts can store Thaumic Energy — "Chi" — in their bodies after gathering it through meditative rituals, then release it to augment their personal abilities.) Various forms of Kung Fu make the warriors and assassins of the secret societies formidable enemies indeed; borrowing cinematic styles from *GURPS Martial Arts* is perfectly appropriate.

China's vast wealth and weakness put it in a unique position diplomatically. Though the Great Powers of Europe could easily start carving up the empire, their mutual suspicion has so far kept their colonial appetites in check. Meanwhile the United States and California both want to keep China intact, though for very different reasons.

### 2.2.9 Japan

The Dragon Emperors of Japan have had a rocky time of it. For centuries they were reduced to little more than figureheads for a series of military dictators, or Shoguns. Under the Shogunate, Japan pursued a policy of strict isolation, deliberately cutting itself off from the world, with only a single trading station at the port of Nagasaki open to foreigners. Even firearms were abolished, to preserve the power and privileges of the sword-wielding samurai class.

All that changed one afternoon when a squadron of United States warships steamed into Tokyo harbor to open diplomatic relations with Japan. Commodore Perry brought with him friendly letters from President Fillmore, and a very unsubtle threat in the form of his ships guns. The message was clear: join the modern world or become a colony of some New European power.

With the reign of the Dragon Emperor Meiji it is clear that Japan has chosen the course of modernization. The Shogunate has been swept away, replaced by a monarchy based on New European models. Intelligent young Japanese students are being sent abroad to learn all they can about steam technology and modern science. Reactionary samurai and feudal lords are having their privileges stripped away in the name of national unity and survival.

The change has not been without problems. At least one of the bright young students sent abroad, Lord Tomino, came back to Japan filled with the desire to increase his own power by building a Giant Steam Automaton to terrorize Tokyo. In some of the provinces criminal gangs have become powerful enough to run entire towns. Liberals demand more and faster change even as conservatives argue against the whole idea. But in general the people of Japan have taken to modernization with enthusiasm, and it is not impossible to envision a day when Japan may be the most advanced nation in the world.

Japan today is a fascinating mixture of old and new, where samurai live by their rigid code of honor even as inventors create scientific marvels. Among the recent products of Japanese invention are miniature phonographs, endlessly amusing Entertainment Clockworks, and a line of Pneumatic Automotives which have even found buyers abroad.

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### 2.2.10 Lands of the British Empire

Expanding first on the basis of trade and sea power, then parlaying new-found wealth into industrial and military might, Britain has taken possession of a huge proportion of the globe in the last century or two. It is said that the sun never sets on the British Empire; it is always daylight somewhere. It controls Australia, New Zealand, and numerous Islands around the globe, and is still expanding in Africa, but the keystone of the structure lies in Asia.

#### 2.2.10.1 India

British India is the main basis of Imperial wealth and power. However, it was acquired almost by accident, when the British East India Company became locked in conflict with European rivals, and developed a strategy of manipulating and subsidizing friendly local princes.

In fact, India has been subject to numerous conquests over the years, mostly by waves of invaders from the north; the most recent series before the British had been various Muslim powers, giving the subcontinent the great Hindu-Muslim religious divide that complicates its politics today. The East India Company moved into the power vacuum created by the decline of the great Mughal Empire, but acquired territory mostly as a base for trade. (Nonetheless, it occasionally engaged in further conquests to suppress hostile princes or inconvenient civil wars on its borders.) However, the Company's problems with internal corruption, and the threat of other European powers to this economically essential possession, led to more and more British government intervention.

The great change came with the Indian Mutiny of 1857–9. A mixture of a popular uprising and a final surge of resistance from the old Indian rulers who had been marginalized by the British, the Mutiny saw two years of bitter fighting and vicious reprisals from both sides. When the British had finally suppressed the disorganized rebels, the Company was blamed, and lost all its remaining political power.

The 1870s sees the height of the British Raj, as rule of India is known; the completion of the Suez Canal (see p. 00) is making communications with home much easier, thus incidentally leading more Britons to bring wives from home, and reducing Anglo-Indian intermarriage. This is part of a greater pattern; the British attitude to India is growing increasingly detached and paternalistic, with attempts to open the Indian Civil Service up to Indians being foiled and the Viceroy often overruling the Council who are supposed to guide him. The spread of railways (backed, of course, by the Steam Lords, and indirectly by the Unseelie) is destroying old patterns of trade, as Britain is increasingly tempted to treat India purely as a source of wealth. However, this land of several hundred million people is too vast and complex to be reduced to subservience overnight.

The India of the *Castle Falkenstein* world is, of course, very much the India of Rudyard Kipling's stories, of sun-reddened veteran soldiers and callow public-school-educated officers facing wily Afghan bandits and the occasional Russian spy on the North-West Frontier, of local British administrators taking tea with maharajahs and dealing with ancient feuds and strange supernatural forces in the hills, and of strange fakir mystics (some of them genuine sorcerers, some even more expert in non-supernatural conjuring tricks).

The nature of local entities such as the demonic *Rakshasa* or vampiric *Baital* is distinctly enigmatic; New European faeries deny that they are related. Meanwhile, European sorcerers travel here in search of ancient secrets, and adventurers look for opportunity in the mountains, deserts, and jungles.

### 2.2.10.2 The African Colonies

Africa in the 1870s is a patchwork of colonies, outposts, and completely unexplored territory, occasionally suffering from outsiders' attentions when European nations discover some new resource or begin competing for imperial glory. To be fair, the British especially have often ventured to this part of the world for nobler motives, not least the suppression of slavery in the first half of the 19th century.

British possessions in Africa are extensive. In the south, Britain has annexed the old Dutch colonies, causing the Afrikaner *Voortrekkers* to migrate northwards and start fighting with the black inhabitants of new areas for control of the land. The recent discovery of diamonds and gold in the interior of southern Africa has led inevitably to a rush of treasure-seekers from across the world. To the north-west, coastal outposts, initially intended to serve solely as bases for trade, naval refueling, and anti-slavery operations, have expanded, and new steamships are pushing up the Niger River to the interior. However, rival New European powers are also active in the region; the French especially seem ambitious. Bold scholars and sorcerers struggle to reach the remote desert city of Timbuktu, with its huge, uncatalogued libraries of ancient Muslim lore, which hold who-knows-what secrets. East Africa, meanwhile, is still being opened up; explorers such as Livingstone, Speke, and of course Burton (see p. 00) have only recently established the general layout of the interior. (So there is still plenty of opportunity for Rider Haggard-style adventures; the *Castle Falkenstein* world doubtless has dozens of lost cities, enigmatic ruins, and twisted magick workings in these parts.) On the coast, the British are still engaged in trying to suppress Arab slave-traders and worrying about increasing German interest in the area.

### 2.2.10.3 Australia and New Zealand

Largely thanks to the navigational brilliance of Captain Cook a century ago, Britain acquired the vast (if largely very empty) land of Australia, using it first as a penal colony. (The convicts were mostly urban petty criminals, with a few political prisoners and a fair number of Irish who had been driven to crime or revolt by the conditions at home.) Free colonists followed, however, and the population grew rapidly; by 1870, it was well over a million. Although the various colonies have a fair amount of self-rule, there is enough taxation without representation to cause grumbling, and a gold rush in the 1850s led to enough social friction to provoke one armed uprising. Meanwhile, the development of sheep farming has led to considerable expansion of the colonized areas, though the great deserts of the interior remain largely empty.

New Zealand, distant but promising, is a minor part of the Empire, although it too is growing. The native Maori people are being displaced, and recently made a serious attempt to fight for their rights; this was ended by an uneasy truce in 1870. The Maori suffered significant casualties in the war, which will take some years to recover.

### 2.2.11 Why Is Flanders Under Water?

The map of New Europa should look familiar enough to inhabitants of our world, except in one respect; there is a hole in Europe.

The "Inner Sea" runs from the North Sea to the Alps. Inhabitants of the world speak of "The Eight Seas" (rather than Seven); although not huge, being a little over 300 miles wide at its broadest, this one runs very deep in places, and provides access to Frankfurt and Leipzig for full-sized ocean-going ships.

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In fact, ancient legends say that the Inner Sea was not always there; they tell of the day when a tall faerie lord descended on an alpine peak and tore the land asunder. Tom Olam did eventually get drunk enough to ask the obvious question one evening; in reply, Auberon just smiled.

If the Inner Sea *was* Auberon's creation, his power has clearly declined since that age; but then, he admits as much to his allies. There is less wild faerie magick in the world than once he knew. But what would his motives have been?

Well, he knows the history of Earth in several universes — a history to which this universe is cleaving with remarkable tenacity, considering all the differences. This means that he knows how much of a battleground north–western Europe is likely to be; he may have hoped to prevent a score of Franco–German wars and invasions. On that theory, the creation of the Inner Sea has been a failure. Some invasions struck through northern Italy, while others made use of whatever light shipping was available. (Napoleon employed the half–faerie Admiral Corik leBecque, who repeatedly secured his crossing of the Inner Sea, though Nelson and the Royal Navy kept the French fleet bottled up there and in port elsewhere.)

As for the people who should have lived on this land; well, the Dutch and Belgians are slightly fewer, and the Dutch especially are even more of a maritime race than in our history. However, they have an ancient, close relationship with the Merfolk and other aquatic and maritime faeries of the Inner Sea, which explains why they have been every bit as formidable a maritime nation as in our history, despite smaller numbers. New European remarks about Dutchmen having gills and webbed feet are not *entirely* jokes.

### 2.2.12 The Verne Cannon and World Peace

The Verne Cannon is a type of gigantic gun, with a bore of 275 centimeters (9 feet). To fire it requires a charge of several tons of guncotton, and each giant shell weighs 500 tons. Aiming the gun is accomplished by means of a series of railroad locomotives and hydraulic rams, all controlled by one of the most advanced calculating engines in the world.

The Verne Cannon can launch shells into orbit, or hit targets anywhere in Europe, giving France the ability to threaten any enemy with a devastating bombardment. The accuracy of the gun is limited by the availability of maps and targeting information, so the French government has begun an intensive program to acquire accurate geographical information. Note that the Cannon can only hit targets whose positions are known — it is almost useless against dirigibles, ships at sea or anything smaller than a fortress or a city.

There are four Verne Cannons, located at fortresses outside Paris. Whenever the guns are fired, windows are shattered all over northern France. Each Cannon is guarded by a full company of soldiers.

So far the Verne Cannon has functioned as a peacekeeper. It is the largest weapon in the world, and nobody wants to risk being on the receiving end of its shells. Napoleon III has wisely kept the Cannon as a defensive weapon, announcing that it will be used only if an enemy attacks France. There is little doubt in anyone's mind that the enemy he means is Prussia. At present no other nation seems to be working on a gun to rival the Verne Cannon, although it is rumored that Prussia is trying to develop other secret weapons of comparable reach and power.

In *GURPS* terms, a shell from the Verne Cannon does 81,200 x 6d damage. The Cannon's rate of fire is very slow — it takes up to an hour to shift the gun to hit a new target, and once on target, reloading still requires three minutes. Shells

travel at about 6 miles per second, so flight time is about 16 seconds per hundred miles.

Minister Verne is most interested in the Cannons peaceful applications. Since it is capable of launching shells into orbit with slight modifications, it could be the center of a French program for the exploration of outer space. The main difficulty is how to cushion any passengers in the shell against the tremendous shock of firing.

### 2.2.13 Ireland

Ireland in the world of *Castle Falkenstein* is a part of Great Britain. However, the situation there is difficult. In the middle ages, Irish and Scottish lords frequently sought to acquire Irish territories. What they found there was a land of squabbling petty kingdoms, some of which sought them as allies, while others fought back against invasion.

Many of the new arrivals settled and became part of local society. Eventually, however, the English crown came to treat Ireland as a subordinate province. Irish resistance was persistent but divided; the English saw the Irish as bandits and barbarians, while the Irish saw the English as outsiders with little sense of honor. When England converted to Protestantism, the Irish remained fiercely Catholic, adding a religious twist to the conflict, and Cromwell went so far as to import loyal Protestant Scots to the northern counties, creating at least one area that was predominantly loyal. For centuries, the Irish seethed, occasionally rising in revolt.

To make matters worse, in the 1840s, the Irish potato crop, which had become the basis for the peasants' diet, was swept by disease, and the country suffered a terrible famine. London was unsympathetic, regarding the Irish as irritating malcontents, and in any case, the idea of government relief for disasters is uncommon in this century; people are supposed to look after themselves, or to turn to private charity. Perhaps a million Irish starved to death; many more fled overseas, creating world-wide exile communities. Some, especially in the United States, have formed a secret society, the Fenians, dedicated to violent revolution; others work for independence peacefully.

Some Britons understand and even sympathize with such movements, and recent legal reforms have given the Irish greater control over their lands. But for many, this means surrender to rebels and murderers, and to judge by our own history, all attempts to grant Ireland more autonomy will fail for the rest of the century.

To add to the difficulty, Ireland is a major center of faerie power, with numerous gates to the Faerie Veil (see p. 00). As a result, the English government is doubly cautious about losing control of some areas. Some faeries sympathize with the Fenians, and some work for peaceful reform, but others, even some grown thoroughly native to the land, have ancient oaths of alliance with the English crown — and a faerie can *never* break an oath.

### 2.2.14 The Balkans and Greece

The south-eastern corner of Europe has been difficult, disputed territory for millennia; the Ottomans were merely the latest eastern power to push through the region on the way to the European heartlands. However, the still more-or-less tribal peoples of these mountainous lands have their own opinions on this subject; when they cannot actually stop an invasion, they retreat to the remote valleys, often resorting to banditry, and tell ferocious tales of their heroic ancestors.

The Ottomans are still the dominant power in this region, although Austria controls a long, narrow strip of the Adriatic coastline, and the small land of Montenegro has long preserved a shaky independence of sorts. Most of the people are



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Christian and see themselves as proudly European, though much the population of Albania is Muslim (their ancestors having converted to escape the threat of Turkish violence and heavy taxes). Although the Ottomans sometimes recruit soldiers from these mountains (such as Mehemet Ali, who became ruler of Egypt; see p. 00, sidebar), they mostly regard these subjects as rebels and bandits. Appalling Ottoman brutality in crushing revolts here often shocks New Europa, losing the Turks many potential friends.

Further south, Greece gained independence in 1830, following a heroic struggle, which gained broad European support, first from romantics such as Lord Byron, then (especially when the Ottomans responded with massacres and brutality) from the general public and politicians. Its people now dream of their classical age of glory; respect among western Europeans for their past heroism is qualified when they side with Russia, simply because Russia fights the Turks.

Unfortunately, when Greece first won independence, the European powers installed a Bavarian prince as its king, and he and his Bavarian advisors made themselves very unpopular; he was deposed (and replaced by a Danish prince) in 1862, and died in Bayern in 1867. The Second Compact may thus have problems finding friends in this land; however, as the traditional birthplace of New European culture and civilization, it still attracts many adventurous tourists and academics.

### 2.2.15 The Leshye

The true rulers of most of Russia, by area, are perhaps not human at all, but Leshye (or Leshiye) — strange forest-faeries who may be encountered throughout eastern Europe, but who dwell in the greatest numbers in Russia. Although the Leshye are loyal members of the Seelie Court, they are also territorial, proud, and given to playing terrifying pranks on human travelers. They are more interested in protecting the Earth than its people; for example, they tear up the railway lines that western Unseelie are promoting as a way to disrupt human magick, because they see them as incursions on their territory.

A Leshye's normal form is that of a gigantic satyr, with cloven hooves and horns, but they also have only a single, unblinking eye in the middle of their foreheads. They are extremely powerful; competent shapeshifters, they can move through their forests like the wind itself, and project powerful Glamours. (See chapter 5 for discussion of faerie powers.) They can also command forest animals, often leading a pack of bears as a human hunter commands hounds. Their greatest power, however, is over the weather; they can call thunderstorms, blizzards, and hurricane-force winds in their immediate locality at whim.

Leshye are compulsive gamblers, often using their powers to settle bets; sharp-witted and brave mortals can sometimes outwit them by using this fact. Alternatively, they can be kept at bay by most of the common faerie Repulsions. Despite their rough ways, they are basically honest, and can be wildly generous to those who do them a good turn. Like their bear pets, they sometimes hibernate in winter.

Leshye are on good terms with the other typical faeries of the area, the female Seelie Russalki and the male Unseelie Vodyany. (The division between Seelie and Unseelie means little in Russia; Russalki sometimes marry Vodyany, both being water-spirits, and then take human lovers without warning them that the Vodyany will object, murderously.) The Russalki *do* have a fondness for Russia's people and society, and when Napoleon marched on Moscow, they persuaded the Leshye to use their weather powers to defeat the invasion, pointing out that the French were intruding on Leshye territory.

### 2.2.16 Il Risorgimento

While there is enormous diversity among Italy's kingdoms, provinces and city-states, there is one thing nearly everyone agrees upon: Italy should be ruled by Italians, not by Austrians, the Pope, or the Bourbon kings of Sicily. The movement to reunite Italy is known as Il Risorgimento ("The Resurgence"), and has support from nearly all segments of society. Capitalists and bankers favor unification because it would be good for business, workers want a more democratic state, and intellectuals want to sweep away the ignorance and poverty which afflicts their country.

The result is that Italy is a hotbed of revolution and Anarchist sentiment. Secret police monitor political groups advocating unification, armies chase rebel bands in Italy's rugged mountains, and Italians overseas support dozens of political movements. There are large exile communities in London, New York, and Buenos Aires, all filled with plots to liberate Italy. Italians can be found in Anarchist organizations throughout New Europa. Austria is the main symbol of foreign oppression, and the Emperor Franz Joseph is the chief enemy of Italian nationalists. Italians work together with other groups seeking independence from the empire.

By far the most romantic leader of Il Risorgimento is Garibaldi. He lived in exile for several years as a gaucho in the Argentine, and his followers are a mix of patriots, gauchos, and colorful characters from all over New Europa. Another symbol of Italian nationalism is the composer Giuseppe Verdi. Because his last name is also the acronym for Vittorio Emmanuelle, Re d'Italia (Vittorio Emmanuelle, King of Italy), crowds can chant *Verdi! Verdi!* and claim they are only showing their approval of his music.

### 2.2.17 Arabia

Theoretically, Arabia is part of the Ottoman Empire, which thus claims the status of guardian of the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina, and authority over the trade routes and desert tribes. The reality is different.

The Arabs have never been comfortable under Turkish rule, and the Bedouin nomads have never taken it very seriously, reverting to their ancient traditions of banditry whenever they wished, and fading into the endless desert wastes in defiance of incompetent or corrupt troops sent after them. In past centuries, the Ottomans have been strong enough to control them anyway, or have offered them a part in glorious and profitable conquests, but the modern Ottoman government, moribund, corrupt, and over-stretched, is simply incapable of exerting authority away from larger cities and the most important roads. Whole towns are ruled, quite openly, by Arab princes. Furthermore, to the Ottomans' shame, they are incapable even of defending the pilgrimage routes to Mecca, so that Muslims performing their sacred duty of traveling there are murdered on the way by casual bandits. Idealistic Arabs dream of full independence from the Turks (and some progressive Turks see the ramshackle Empire as a dead weight round their country's neck), but to judge by our history, it will take half a century and a world war before the situation changes; meanwhile, Prussia seeks to further its influence in the region by helping the Ottomans drive railway lines through the Levant towards the Holy Cities.

Brave European travelers bring back astonishing stories from the region, such as the recent history of the Emirs of Hail, the capital of the region of Jabal Shammar, a Shakespearean epic of assassination, usurpation, insanity, and possibly sorcery. Those who seek to explore the unconquered deserts of the Empty Quarter, or to trade for matchless Arab horses, should be warned, however; Arabia is still a land of mighty djinn (see p. 00) and poet-wizards, and although its cities may be governed by corrupt Ottoman officials, true power, on the city streets as well as in the desert, lies in the hands of tribal Arab sheikhs.

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### 2.2.18 Egypt

Egypt is nominally an Ottoman province, but is actually becoming an international arena for politicians and sorcerers. It consists, essentially, of the valley and delta of the River Nile; a hot land made fertile by regular flooding. Its history is, of course, very rich. It was one of the first great civilizations, and thousands of years ago, the Unseelie manipulated its population in the guise of animal-headed gods. However, they were countered by Seelie counter-plots and human magick; in fact, many modern sorcerous Orders claim Ancient Egyptian origins, authentically or otherwise. Eventually, the Unseelie found other powers in the region with more interest in warfare, and Egypt fell into long decline.

After periods of Greek and Roman rule, it became part of the Islamic Empire in the Middle Ages, eventually coming under Ottoman control. However, strong governors and the *Mamelukes*, a military class descended from slave-soldiers, often ran the province as their own.

In the modern era, Egypt became important because it lay on the most direct route from Europe to the Far East. In 1798, Napoleon led an expedition there, seeking to cut Britain off from India, but was himself cut off from home by the British Navy, and forced to retreat. However, this contact renewed European interest in Egypt. Meanwhile, an Albanian officer in Ottoman service, Mehemet Ali, rose to power in Egypt, wiping out the Mamelukes, and setting his own terms when asked to aid the Turks against revolts in Greece. He eventually found magickal allies, modernized his army, and attacked his Ottoman "overlords," nearly reaching Istanbul before the European powers intervened to maintain the strategic balance in 1841.

Between 1858 and 1869, a French company built the Suez Canal between the Mediterranean and Red Seas, simplifying travel to the East, and making Egypt even more politically important. Britain and France have come to dominate local politics, and the national debts run up by the Khedive, or ruler, keep him firmly in the Europeans' pockets. Today, the cities of Port Said and Suez on the canal, Egypt's capital of Cairo, and the great port of Alexandria, are bustling hives of intrigue and commerce. Although local technology is patchy, the mingling of ancient inventiveness and New European expatriates sometimes throws up oddities, while sorcerers and diplomats of a dozen nations rub shoulders around luxury hotels, seething bazaars, and ancient, mysterious ruins.

### 2.2.19 The Late Unpleasantness

The American Civil War lasted from 1861 to 1864, and saw many revolutions in how wars are fought. Instead of small professional forces, it saw the deployment of mass armies. It saw the development of a host of new weapons, including ironclads, dirigibles, submersibles and Gatling guns. The war ended the question of slavery in the United States, and effectively ended it in the world.

The armies of the South fought with tremendous bravery and skill, but were ultimately overwhelmed by the North's greater population and industrial capacity. With the exception of Lees abortive invasion of Pennsylvania, the war was fought on Southern soil, and consequently large regions are still in ruins. Southern cities and plantations were burned, and the entire Southern economy was wrecked, both by the fighting and then by the end of slavery. However, thanks to former President Abraham Lincoln, the process of rebuilding the South is well underway, and Lincoln has done much to make Southern leaders see that their region can only prosper if the freed slaves become full partners in politics, society and business.

An important legacy of the Civil War is the large number of former Confederates who left the country at the end of the conflict to seek fortune and adventure abroad. Seasoned Confederates have turned up as mercenaries or serving in armies around the world. Confederate inventors have taken their Infernal Devices or Fantastic Vehicles abroad, and a few have become Criminal Masterminds. Virtually the entire Confederate Aerial Corps has joined the ranks of the Aerial Pirates in the Caribbean and Antillea.

What alarms officials of the United States government is the possibility that all these disgruntled ex-Confederates may be plotting a rematch. Scattered across the globe, with dozens of secret bases, powerful Infernal Devices, and a fanatical cadre of some of the best soldiers in the world, a Second Confederate conspiracy would be a threat far greater than even the World Crime League.

### **2.2.20 The United States Secret Service**

Until the Civil War, the United States lacked any official government espionage agency. The government and the army mostly relied on newspaper reports to learn about the activities of foreign governments. All that changed with Secession. President Lincoln recruited his old friend Allan Pinkerton to act as the nation's chief of intelligence-gathering and covert operations. The Pinkerton Detective Agency formed the nucleus of the Secret Service.

Secret Service agents served with distinction during the Civil War, thwarting plots by Confederate agents both in America and abroad. With the end of the conflict, the agency discovered new threats to deal with. Secret Service agents tracked down counterfeiters in the United States, gathered information in Orleans, Texas and California, and started keeping tabs on European agents in America. They also took on the job of protecting the President. But the Service's most spectacular exploits were its battles against various Criminal Masterminds — Dr. Inigio Lovelorn, General Nathan Bedford Forrest, and a host of other aerial pirates and mad inventors.

At present there are thirty-eight active Secret Service agents, along with a much larger number of clerks, technicians and support personnel. The Service is under the direction of James J. Brooks, and is headquartered in the Treasury building in Washington. The Secret Service makes use of Calculation Engines to sift reports and collate information on possible threats to the nation.

Secret Service agents are all extremely well-trained and competent individuals, equipped with the best gadgets American invention can create. A few are trained sorcerers belonging to the Freemasonic Order. Since the end of the Civil War a couple of former Confederate spies have found places in the Secret Service. While they generally operate in or near the United States of America, their missions can take them almost anywhere in the world in pursuit of enemy spies or villains bent on conquest.

### **2.2.21 American Freemasonry**

The Freemasons are more than just the only legal Sorcerous Order in the United States. Their influence pervades the government, business and the army. Masons were an important element in the American struggle for independence, and since then they have quietly built up their power to the point where they effectively control the United States. All Presidents are Masons (or become Masons as soon as they are elected), most members of Congress are members, and nearly all the richest Robber Barons are part of the brotherhood. The true extent of Masonic power is a secret from most citizens of the United States, but almost everyone is aware that they are a very influential group.

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The Masonic leadership is behind the growing tilt of the United States towards the Steam Lords of Great Britain and the Unseelie-backed Prussia of Otto von Bismarck. They also encourage an aggressive policy toward the other nations of America. It is unclear if the Masons are motivated chiefly by simple greed and ambition, or if they have some more secret goal. If Unseelie influence among the Freemasons is greater than realized, the Second Compact is going to have a much harder fight to protect the world.

### 2.2.22 The Free State of Orleans

The mouth of the Mississippi is under the control of the Free State of Orleans, occupying what would be the state of Louisiana in another history. Orleans (the "New" is generally dropped, especially when referring to the state rather than the city) has been independent since 1806, when Aaron Burr engineered a revolt among the French inhabitants who had no desire to join the United States. Burr maintained the Free State's independence through a combination of clever diplomacy and the sorcerous power of his mistress Marie Laveau. Orleans is defended against the United States by the armies of Texas, against Texas by the United States, and against everyone by an army of undead zombie soldiers.

Aaron Burr has been President-for-Life of Orleans for the entire history of the nation. Currently 114 years old, Burr is still in charge, though nobody has actually seen him for years. Day-to-day government of the country lies mostly in the hands of the Mayors of New Orleans.

Orleans is the chief port and base of operations for the aerial pirates which infest the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. In New Orleans, the pirates can sell their stolen goods with no questions asked, repair and refit their ships and spend all their earnings in the city's saloons and bordellos. In exchange, the pirates are expected to help defend the Free State, and avoid preying on ships flying the Orleans flag.

Smuggling and piracy are not the only sources of wealth in the Free State of Orleans. While the rest of the Old South's plantation economy was destroyed by the Civil War, in Orleans the grand mansions surrounded by fields of cotton and sugar cane still stand. President-for-Life Burr has abolished slavery, but the only effect has been to turn slaves into sharecroppers.

### 2.2.23 The Mayan Empire

Just over 400 years ago, the ruler of the Central American city of Mayapan, Hunac Ceel, leapt into the city's sacrificial well in order to commune with his gods. Remarkably, he returned, bearing a prophecy of a strange imminent invasion — and advice on how to prepare against it.

Thus it was that the Spanish *conquistadores* arrived in the Yucatan to discover not only vast and wealthy cities, but a well-organized empire, based on trade, which politely accepted missionaries but which was fully able to resist both military attack and political subversion. Thus it is that the Mayan Empire still stands today, ruling the Yucatan Peninsula from the great city of Chichen Itza. The Mayans are willing and able to trade with outsiders, and have adopted New European technology, although they are not especially advanced (in *GURPS* terms, they are at early rather than late TL5), and certainly cannot match the miraculous science of the Incas (see p. 00). Chichen Itza is comparable with any city in Europe. However, the Maya are still regarded with distrust and apprehension by New Europeans; not only do they still worship strange and ancient gods, but they sometimes engage in blood sacrifice.

This is not conducted on anything like the psychotic industrial scale of the old Aztec empire, and the Templars have never been able to muster the sort of outraged large-scale crusade that brought down the old Aztec sorcerer-priests, but the fact remains that Mayans devoutly believe that some blood must be shed to maintain the balance and prosperity of their nation, and part of the system is the casting of great ritual spells using Unraveling (see p. 00). As a result, a Mayan traveling almost anywhere else in the world will suffer from a -15 point Social Stigma, and a suspected or known Mayan sorcerer will *also* suffer a negative Reputation as a likely magickal murderer.

### 2.2.24 The Good Old Boys From Brasil

After the Civil War, several thousand Southerners chose exile over life in the defeated South. The ex-Confederates purchased land and slaves in Brasil, trying to recreate conditions in the antebellum South. Most of them grow coffee and tobacco, with a few diehards struggling to make cotton thrive. Most of the "Confederados," as their fellow Brasilians call them, live in the Sao Paolo province in the south. They have become very influential in Brasil as a result of their American business connections.

The Confederate colony is also the base for the pirate dirigible *Alabama II*, commanded by the brilliant Civil War raider Captain Raphael Semmes. The *Alabama II* is a typical pirate airship, but her captain and crew are all skilled veterans (assume a skill of 14 in anything related to operating or fighting the ship). At least six American merchant ships have been looted off the Brazilian coast. Complaints from Washington to Rio have little effect.

It is rumored that the Confederados brought away large stocks of gold and some secret weapons from the dying Confederacy. The nature of these secret weapons is unknown — stories range from rocket bombs or rapid-firing rifles to things as exotic as mind-control rays, poison gas or weather control devices. What is certain is that there are some determined and well-financed Southerners in Brasil, preparing for a rematch.

### 2.2.25 The Empire of the Ants

Farmers in the lower Amazon basin were recently forced to abandon their lands after an invasion of strange big-headed ants. According to witnesses, the ants acted with amazing co-ordination and planning, as if under intelligent control. A few survivors claim to have seen ants using tools and fire, but this seems unlikely. The ants have systematically driven all animals from a region about ten miles across, and are slowly expanding their range. Nobody is quite sure what to do about the ants — suggestions range from attempts to communicate to ambitious schemes for eradication.

The origin of these insects and their ultimate goal are a complete mystery. Are they the products of some mastermind's laboratory? Could it be that Evolution has brought forth the species that will succeed Mankind as rulers of the planet? Only time will tell . . .

### 2.2.26 Sky Pyramids

The Sky Pyramids are the most impressive symbols of the Sapa Inca's power. They are large pyramids of some ceramic material, roughly a hundred yards square at the base and fifty yards high. The shining gold sides are decorated with images of the sun. They fly by means of the secret Inca anti-gravity device, powered by Sun's Blood power generators which give them almost infinite endurance. Sky Pyramids are relatively slow flyers, moving at a stately pace of about 20 miles per hour. Each Sky Pyramid is armed with a large Sun-Fire beam at the apex (equivalent to a military dinosaur

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laser; see p. UT50 and p. UT125), and can carry an entire regiment of troops. Sky Pyramids can also damage objects on the ground by landing on them. The advanced ceramic covering provides DR 100 protection on all faces.

### 2.2.26.1 The Nazca Lines

The Nazca plain is just southwest of Cuzco, a vast level expanse of bare dirt and scattered tufts of grass. (See *GURPS Places of Mystery*, p. PM107, for more details.) The plain is inscribed with colossal figures of animals and vast geometric patterns. Perfectly straight lines stretch for miles. Inca magicians use the lines to travel to other planets, other times and other universes.

### 2.2.27 The Dragon Emperors

In 220 B.C., a clan of dragons migrated eastward and established control of China, which was then in a period of civil war following the breakdown of the Chou dynasty. Shih Huang Ti, a dragon lord, became the first Dragon Emperor. In the decades that followed, other dragons became rulers in nearby kingdoms. Over the centuries, there have been changes of dynasty, wars and rebellions, but all the rulers of China, Japan and much of Southeast Asia have been either dragons or human–dragon hybrids. By now, nearly all the upper classes in the Far East have at least some dragon blood.

The Dragon Emperors have given their realms centuries of stability. They are all potent sorcerers, and have the friendship and alliance of the great and ancient dragons of the east. Unfortunately, their draconic patience and resistance to change have led to an unhealthy social rigidity and stagnation.

The present Chinese dynasty produces quite active rulers, though the current Dragon Emperor, Tung Chih, is a weak character dominated by his formidable mother, the dowager Empress Tzu Hsi. Tzu Hsi is a decisive and able ruler, but is hampered by an amazing lack of knowledge about the world beyond China itself. She is working to keep European intrusions under control, but the dynasty may ultimately be no more successful than their human counterparts in our history.

By contrast, the Dragon Emperor of Japan, Meiji, has recognized the need to modernize his realm, and has eagerly embraced all the innovations of New European technology. His goal is to create a centralized, powerful state on the Prussian model. So far, his policies have had mixed results — Japan is making great strides, but has also been plagued by Criminal Masterminds using advanced technology to wreak havoc.

Western dragons visiting the East may be treated with deep respect by humans, but they cannot depend on the friendship of the local lords; while the oriental dragons acknowledge kinship, they are not entirely immune to the sense of cultural superiority often displayed by their human subjects.

### 2.2.28 Six–Guns and Samurai

The adventure possibilities in Meiji Japan are almost endless. One can encounter anything from fox spirits to ninja to giant robots — or all three at the same time! The cities of Tokyo, Osaka and Nagasaki are as gritty and industrial as anywhere in New Europa, but rural villages have not changed in centuries. The combination of traditional Japanese concepts of honor and duty with the possibilities of Steam Age gadgetry opens up hundred of possibilities. Will Lord Tomino and others like him become Steam Samurai, mixing technology and tradition? Will Japan become a

cyberpunk–steampunk land of megacorporations and clockwork prosthetic street toughs?

To most foreigners, Japan is still unknown territory. Japanese customs and society are a complete mystery to most outsiders, and the Japanese are hardly better informed about foreign practices. The culture shock of a group of New European adventurers in Japan can itself provide material for dozens of adventures.

### 2.2.29 Other Empires

Almost all nations which aspire to sophistication desire overseas empires, to a greater or lesser extent. "Imperialism" is not yet a dirty word. There *are* high-minded folk who argue that the European powers exploit and abuse their subjects, but even they are as likely to argue for reform as for abolition, and many moralists hold that empires can be a civilizing force, bringing law, technology, and Christianity to the "natives."

These people would not deny that the rulers gain a great deal of economic advantage, acquiring reliable sources of raw materials and captive markets for their industrial production, but would argue that the result is benefits for both sides. (There are a few daring students of economics who suggest that the cost of administering an empire, and the distorting effects of focussing all trade on these scattered territories, outweigh the benefits, but that is a minority view.) Thus, Africa, Asia, and South America have been the scene of a series of grabs for land and local quarrels over the last few centuries. With modern medicine overcoming tropical diseases, the last few unexploited regions are opening up.

*Spain* and *Portugal* were the first great European imperialists. The Portuguese, constrained by lack of manpower, were mostly limited to Brasil and a string of trading outposts across the rest of the world, although they have some holdings in Africa. Spain was slightly less successful than in our history, being foiled by Mayan and Incan power in the Americas, but reinforced by fanatical Templar sorcerers, the Spanish did take Mexico and extend their power across the Pacific. Today, however, Spain is a shadow of its former self; devastated by Napoleon and wracked by intermittent civil wars since his time, it is gradually losing control of its remaining possessions.

Other modern nations in the game include *France*, an assertive power (see p. 00), with strong interests across much of Africa (although it has largely abandoned attempts to meddle in Mexico), and *Holland* always a nautical, trading power, that has acquired some territory in Asia, especially in Indonesia. *Belgium* perhaps feels left behind in the race for empire, although it is more preoccupied with preserving itself between greater European powers; however, to judge by our history, its King Leopold II will eventually cause considerable harm by taking *personal* control of the Congo.

### 2.2.30 International Menaces

There are a few New European organizations that transcend national boundaries, while wielding enough power to worry many governments. Unfortunately, few of them are up to any good.

#### 2.2.30.1 The World Crime League

Criminal masterminds are an arrogant, egocentric breed, but they also tend to be intelligent, and some of them are even wise enough to recognize the possibility of strength in numbers. The World Crime League is the dangerous result.

One part Cosa Nostra, two parts SMERSH, the League's goal is world domination. Of course, it approaches this by



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promoting the interests of the master–criminals who comprise its hierarchy, so its individual actions may seem surprisingly varied. Its operations certainly encompass vice, extortion, and some audacious robberies, along with the occasional attempt to overthrow whole governments, and the assassination of those who inconvenience it. Its supreme leader is Professor James Moriarty (p. 00), whose genius permits him to sustain both this role and a facade of respectability.

### 2.2.30.2 The World Anarchist Brotherhood

This group is so shadowy that it is not at all clear that it can be considered one body at all; revolutionary societies are notoriously prone to splintering, after all. In fact, even its name was tagged on to it by a sensationalist newspaper reporter, and some of its members have been known to write rambling letters to the press, denouncing the label, and even attacking actual anarchism.

Its leader, if it has one, is Karl Marx (p. 00); its goal is the destruction of all existing governments, and their replacement by some kind of communistic Utopia. Its actions are usually quite ingeniously designed to disrupt and terrorize the forces of order in general, rather than striking at individual injustices, but local factions and individuals may attack particular problems, or even work off personal grudges.

### Chapter 3. A More Civilized Age (14pp)

The world of Castle Falkenstein is not contemporary America, and it's not quite our Nineteenth Century either. People act differently and think differently. For players and Gamemasters alike, here is a short guide to how people behave in the Steam Age of New Europa.

#### BB Social Class

It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of social class in New Europa, although sometimes it doesn't work the way modern readers might expect. Society in Castle Falkenstein is very stratified, and mobility is limited. Each social class has its own place in society — its own rights and duties. Knowing one's place is vital.

There are approximately nine levels of society, which are grouped into the Upper, Middle and Lower Classes. At the top are Royalty. While the Divine Right of Kings is no longer an accepted principle of government, there is still a widespread notion that monarchs are different from the ordinary run of human beings. The only people who don't defer to Royalty are other Royalty. Among monarchs one's formal title is secondary to the importance of one's kingdom — Queen Victoria is just a Queen while Pedro II of Brasil is an Emperor, yet nobody would ever give Pedro precedence over Victoria. Below Royalty are the Aristocrats, titled nobility with huge landed estates. If any group wanted to call themselves the "Masters of the Universe" it would be them. They are still probably the richest group in the world, although some American millionaires might challenge that claim. The Aristocrats have hereditary titles, some dating back centuries. The governments of all the monarchies of New Europa are filled with

Aristocrats. The Second Empire of Napoleon III in France has a more modern aristocracy descended from Napoleon I's supporters, with some of Napoleon III's cronies added.

At the bottom of the Upper Classes are the Gentry. There is no sharp line of division between the Gentry and the Aristocracy; the two groups often intermarry. Gentry are people of "good family" but without titles. People who have earned knighthoods fit in the Gentry category. Like the Aristocracy, members of the Gentry don't work for a living.

The Middle Classes can be broken into three groups, as well. The top of the Middle Classes are Professionals — doctors, barristers, bankers and stockbrokers. The richest manufacturers and capitalists fit into this category, unless they have managed to secure a knighthood and join the Gentry. Professionals look and act much like their betters in the Gentry, but the gulf between them is wide.

In the middle of the social scale is the Business class, made up of engineers, business owners, merchants and the like. This is a fairly new class, as most of its members do things which didn't exist a century before. As a result its members are most devoted to the idea of social mobility — and provoke the most resentment, both from the upper classes (who see them as pushy) and the lower classes (who see them as greedy).

At the bottom of the Middle Classes are Tradesmen. Tradesmen are small shopkeepers, ship captains, clerks, independent farmers, and self-employed individuals like Journalists or Inventors. Tradesmen may be the most self-consciously proper about their behavior, because they are most worried about dropping down into the Lower Classes.

Skilled workers are at the top of the Lower Classes. Artisans like mechanics, engine drivers, valets, policemen, cab drivers and builders fit in this category. As a class they tend to be fairly satisfied with their lot, for while they have little chance of moving up their place is also pretty secure. They are a fairly religious group, though usually not as aggressively pious as the Middle Classes.

Below them come Laborers, who make up the vast majority of people in the Steam Age. Laborers dig the coal, farm the fields, sweep the chimneys, clean the houses, and do all the hard physical work of the world. They are the ones most likely to drown their misery in cheap gin, and the ones most attracted by the ideas of reformers and Anarchists.

At the very bottom of society are the Poor, made up of workers displaced by machinery, farmhands thrown off their land, and all the outcasts of society. They manage to scrape by in a variety of appalling ways — begging, prostitution, picking through refuse, and crime. Reformers and evangelists of all types concentrate their efforts on the Poor.

#### CC The Upper Classes

Life is good when you're at the top of the pyramid. Aristocrats and Gentry

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live lives of leisure, and have the time and education to engage in pursuits like science, literature and scholarship. It's no surprise that most explorers are from the Upper Classes, because they can go off to remote parts of the globe and nobody can stop them.

The key to being a member of the Upper Classes is not working for a living. All members of the Aristocracy and Gentry have some source of external income which frees them from the need to earn a paycheck. A few unfortunate souls don't have quite enough income to manage without a job, and so strive desperately to get positions in the Army or in government service.

The basis of most Upper Class fortunes is land, and lots of it. Owning stock certificates or government bonds may be profitable, but land is eternal. Land generates income in the form of rents from hundreds of tenant farmers. Wise and prudent landowners encourage their tenants to use progressive farming methods, and invest their rents in improvements like roads, rail lines and better housing. Venal and foolish ones exploit their tenants to the limit. Some of the more daring souls have invested their revenues in factories, railroad companies or other businesses.

Members of the Upper Classes really consider only two careers worth following: government and the military. In most monarchies (though not France) titled aristocrats automatically have a seat in the parliament or its equivalent. And even where they do not, aristocrats have the money and connections to get elected. Furthermore, since few nations pay their elected officials, anyone who has to work for a living can't afford to be in the government. (America is a notable exception, which is why the wealthy old families there have mostly abandoned politics.) In military service, it is considered important to get into a "fashionable" regiment, where an officer can associate with others of his own class.

Otherwise, the Upper Classes are free to do as they like: a gentleman or lady can go off exploring, dabble in science or Magick, travel the world, stay in one room, gamble, collect pottery, join the Church, be a cowboy, or write novels. The only rule is that one should do something solely for enjoyment or out of a sense of duty. Doing something for money is vulgar.

### SB Clubs

Almost all members of the Upper Classes (and many of the Middle Classes as well) belong to clubs. These range from serious-minded political or literary societies to groups who just like to raise hell together. As one might expect, clubs are just as socially stratified as everything else in the Victorian era, and are usually all-male or all-female. Some clubs (marked with a B) have their own club buildings, others meet at restaurants or hotels.

Academe (Munchen): An association of writers, artists, philosophers, actors and intellectuals of all kinds. The center for highbrow discussion and witty repartee in Bayern. B

Athena Club (Munich): A club for intellectual women, with some of the Continent's most accomplished women writers, artists and scientists as members.

Carlton Club (London): The heart of England's Conservative Party, the Carlton is frequented by Conservative stalwarts — aristocrats and the richest industrialists. B

Chatelaine Club (London): A club for aristocratic ladies, where most of the events of the London social season are arranged. Because nearly all the women have husbands in politics, the Chatelaine is a major center for discreet deals and power-brokering among the ladies. B

Explorers' Club (Munich): A club for adventurous explorers, particularly those interested in making detailed observations of other cultures around the world. B

Garrick (London): Club for actors, opera singers, theater professionals and playwrights. A hotbed of all the latest theatrical gossip.

Geographic Society (London): The premier club for explorers and travelers, with affiliate clubhouses in remote corners of the British Empire. Members must actually have travelled extensively or have made important contributions to geographical knowledge. B

Jockey Club (Paris): Ostensibly for racing fans, the Jockey Club is the stronghold of French aristocrats, especially dissolute younger nobles. Wild behavior and heavy drinking are practically mandatory.

Le Legion (Paris): A conservative political club for members of the haut bourgeoisie, particularly military officers and veterans. The members are almost all fervent Bonapartists and supporters of Napoleon III. B

Marlborough Club (London): Founded by Edward, the Prince of Wales, the simplest description of the Marlborough is "Friends of Bertie." Since the Prince enjoys meeting interesting people, that means the Marlborough has a surprisingly eclectic membership. Naturally all the highest-ranked English nobles are members, but so are some actors, writers, travelers and even boxers.

Reform Club (London): The birthplace and stronghold of England's Liberal Party, the Reform is favored by business leaders, bankers and publishers. It stands across the street from the rival Carlton Club. B

Salon de Paris (Paris): A women's club established by Empress Eugenie of France. While it is devoted to discussing literature and art, the primary activity is gossip, the more scandalous the better. B

Societe de Calculation (Paris): A club for calculation engineers, it is known for its prestigious lecture series.

Steam Engineers' Society (London): The leading organization of steam engineers and inventors, founded by Sir Isambard Kingdom Brunel. The clubhouse is a marvel of advanced gadgetry, and even has mechanical servants. B

Whitefriars (London): A literary club for writers and intellectuals, with a

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strong emphasis on wit and cleverness. The place to go if you want to hear the latest clever sayings. B

### SB Horses and Carriages

Horses are still the main mode of transportation in the Steam Age, but they're also an important sign of status. Knowing how to ride and handle a horse is a mark of good breeding, and keeping your own horse and carriage is required for anyone in the professional class or higher.

Horses themselves come in a variety of breeds, but functionally fit into five types. Racehorses are the most delicate, the fastest and the most expensive. They are fantastically temperamental, and can cost more than a middle-class family would earn in a year. Hunters and warhorses are bred for speed and endurance. Warhorses require special training to prevent them from panicking amid gunfire and explosions. Hunters are taught to jump over fences and hedges. For more everyday use mares and geldings are steady and dependable horses for riding or to draw light carriages. Cobs are heavy draft horses, used to draw coaches, wagons and farm equipment. Children often learn to ride on a pony, and pony-carts are used by the elderly as a kind of powered wheelchair.

Carriages are essential to one's status. Anyone of the professional class or higher should own one. The lightest carriage is a gig or surrey, with two wheels. They are drawn by one or two horses — to look really smart one should have a matched pair of horses. The Steam Age equivalent of a young man in a sports car is a young gentleman in a gig with a matched pair. A larger four-wheeled coach with a "convertible" top is called a victoria (in honor of the Queen, of course). They are generally pulled by two horses and hold up to four people. The biggest coaches have four or even six horses and can carry up to six people. Only the most wealthy have a full-sized coach.

Commercial equivalents of all of these exist. A cab is essentially a closed gig available for hire. Stagecoaches are large coaches running on a fixed schedule, with replacement horses stationed along the route. One public vehicle which doesn't have a private equivalent is the omnibus, a horse-drawn bus plying a route in a city or large town. They are also chartered for excursions.

### SB Nonhumans in Society

The nonhumans of the world of Castle Falkenstein fit surprisingly well into the social structure. Dragons and Daoine Sidhe are accepted as members of the aristocracy, lesser Faerie are usually lower class, and Dwarfs are solidly in the middle class. Their behavior and attitudes tend to reflect their position in human society. Dragons are thoroughly aristocratic in outlook — even the oldest "old families" of human society can't trace their lineage back to the Cretaceous Era. Faerie Lords and Ladies act like

human aristocrats of a century earlier. Brownies defer to their "betters" much like human peasants (though Pixies are as free of social convention as wild animals). Dwarfs, like middle-class humans, value hard work, self-improvement and thrift.

#### CC The Middle Classes

The concept of a "middle class" is a fairly recent development. Before the past couple of centuries there were only the gentry and the common people. The growth of trade, industry and cities has turned the middle class into the backbone of society, but there are still some growing pains as the rest of society adjusts to this new state of affairs.

The Middle Classes are the most stereotypically Victorian in their attitudes about religion, morality and correct behavior. They are concerned with being and appearing "respectable" because they don't have the security of the Upper Classes and don't want to drop back down into the Lower. Middle-class men work; that's what separates them from the Upper Classes. But middle-class women generally don't. As long as the husband is earning a good living, a middle-class household can imitate upper-class existence, with a cook, a housemaid, and perhaps even a scullery-maid or boy. However, the husband's earnings are likely to be the only source of income. A successful solicitor might have a son at Eton, a large townhouse and half a dozen servants, but if he is killed or becomes unable to work, there is little between the family and destitution. That's one of the reasons middle-class folk in the Steam Age are so driven and obsessed by business.

#### SB Victorian Prudery

The prudishness for which the Victorians are notorious was actually not a very widespread phenomenon. It was an attitude almost entirely confined to the middle class, but since they were the primary consumers of most fiction of the day, their attitudes are the ones which have been preserved in books and stories.

The Victorian lower classes were a crude bunch, as one might expect from people who spent their days in backbreaking toil and their nights in pubs. The entertainment in music-halls, which catered to the working class, was full of racy jokes, showgirls in tight dresses, and bawdy songs. The great British tradition of lowbrow humor (perhaps best exemplified in our own time by Benny Hill) is a direct descendant of music-hall entertainment. What prudery the lower classes did have was due to the influence of religion — in particular the temperance movement, which took aim at all sorts of licentious behavior besides drinking.

Nor were the upper classes much better. In the Nineteenth Century the aristocrats of Europe were continuing a tradition of uproarious behavior dating back to the days of the Vandals. As a concession to propriety the Victorian upper classes kept their most scandalous behavior behind closed

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doors, but that hardly slowed them down.

The middle classes were the guardians of morality. They were the most fervent church-goers, the ones most attached to the idea of self-improvement, and the ones who had the most to lose. The upper classes were more or less immune to scandal, and the lower classes were at the bottom of the pyramid anyway. The middle classes aspired to rise in society, and so worked hard to behave. Ultimately they were able to impose their codes of conduct on the rest of society, at least in public.

To be properly Victorian, any reference to bodily functions should be discreetly veiled by euphemism. This includes just about all bodily functions, but especially anything even remotely related to reproduction. No part of the body below the shoulders should be described in anything but the vaguest of terms. Acceptable euphemisms are Latin terms (for the well-educated), or painful circumlocutions ("limbs" for legs, or "bathroom" for a privy).

Of course, by modern standards Victorians were brutally frank about such matters as death, illness, race, and class. Every society has its taboos.

### CC The Lower Orders

The great bulk of society in the Steam Age are the Lower Classes. They work for other people, they own little or no property, and they have almost no power to change their lot. They work in grimy factories or farms, live in squalid tenements or cottages, and get one day off a week. One thing modern readers should keep in mind is that the grim life of the urban workers was a vast improvement over the lives of their parents and grandparents. The great industrial cities grew because workers flocked to them in search of a better life. Toiling in a factory for twelve hours a day is hard work, but it beats the life of a peasant. Urban slums are crowded and filthy, but at least you don't have to sleep in the same room as your cow.

Being a member of the Lower Orders has some advantages. There is no need to worry about "respectability" or correct behavior when you're at the bottom anyway. Lower-class women have a good deal of freedom, both to work and in their personal lives. Furthermore, members of the lower classes are effectively invisible to their "betters." Detectives like Sherlock Holmes and others have learned that dressing as a beggar or a laborer is the best form of camouflage in a city for that reason.

However, there are considerable drawbacks to being poor. The chief one, of course, is not having any money. Lower-class individuals can't just drop everything to go off on adventures because they can't risk losing their dangerous, monotonous jobs. It is also hard for members of the lower classes to enter places favored by their betters — restaurants and hotels simply won't admit someone who is obviously poor or lower-class. The police and other authorities are likely to assume all lower-class individuals are criminals if any trouble arises.

### SB Servants

A subset of the lower classes who play a big part in the lives of the upper and middle classes are servants. In Continental households servants are still treated as almost members of the family, but in Britain they are expected to be unseen and unheard. This doesn't mean they can't see and hear things, though. Servants know pretty much everything that happens in the household in which they are employed, even things their employers want kept secret. Unscrupulous servants sometimes enter the employ of Criminal Masterminds and make use of their position for blackmail or robbery.

The most common servant is a maid. In small households she is a maid-of-all-work, who basically does all the housekeeping chores. Bigger households break up the position into specializations — ladies' maids, who help their mistresses get dressed and undressed and take care of their clothing; housemaids, who clean (sometimes divided up according to the part of the house they work in); and scullery maids, who wash dishes and polish silver.

Food preparation is handled by a cook, assisted by scullery maids and under-cooks in large households. Cooks were also expected to serve as a kind of sergeant in charge of the other servants. Very fancy households might have a French or Italian chef, and Chinese cooks are common in the Bear Flag Empire.

The butler is the chief servant and is in overall charge of running the household. They are also in charge of the wine cellar, and in smaller households function as the master's valet. Footmen are male under-servants and do jobs like fetching and carrying, helping people into carriages, and waiting at dinner. A valet is a gentleman's personal servant, in charge of shaving him, laying out his clothes, and helping him dress.

Outdoor servants include gardeners, gamekeepers (who guard the master's land against poachers), coachmen, and grooms (who take care of horses).

### Pubs

#### 2.2.31 Pubs

Pubs are the British counterparts to German beer-halls; the word is short for "Public Houses" (i.e. a place that sells alcohol to the public). The archetypal pub exists to sell drinks to working men at weekends and in the evenings; few bother providing food or accommodation, although of course their rural and small-town cousins, the inns, exist to provide both to travelers. The higher social classes mostly avoid pubs, although of course imperfectly respectable young men have always been prone to slipping off to taverns to drink,



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and as the century progresses, pubs (like the music-halls, which often started as extensions to pubs) will extend their appeal up the social scale.

Beer is very much the drink of preference, in Britain as in Germany (except in parts of the rural British West Country, where very potent cider remains popular), although a pub will have a few spirits behind the bar for customers with something to celebrate; gin is still associated with the bad old days of mass drunkenness, and pubs are a little more respectable than the old, despised Georgian gin palaces.

The Temperance movement sometimes tries to compete with these sinful places by running teetotal "pubs" selling coffee or other non-alcoholic drinks. Respectable women will not usually go into pubs, although some pubs may seek to provide facilities for their male customers' wives, to increase their trade. (This is particularly likely in the *Castle Falkenstein* world, where the position of women is slightly more free than in our own.)

In their efforts to attract custom, pubs are installing ever more ornamentation, often borrowing a rococo decorative style from the Paris of the Second Empire; the grandest have high ceilings, carved oak woodwork, and masses of gilt decoration, and feature music from large, coin-operated music boxes. (A dwarf-built public-house music box can be an impressive sight, although only a few incorporate steam power or Babbage engines.)

### BB Being a Gentleman

There are two parts to being a gentleman or a lady. The first is not working for a living, and the second is behaving like a gentleman. The first part means that a gentleman has to have a source of income, or at least appear to. It is not unknown for ladies or gentlemen who have squandered their capital to resort to fraud or crime to support themselves, rather than suffer the disgrace of taking a job. There is a narrow "gray area" for professions which don't involve actually charging fees or drawing a salary — being a professor, a sorcerer, or having a position in the government or the army. Of course, a gentleman who just happens to make a lot of money keeps his status; the important thing is not to seem to care.

The second part of being a lady or a gentleman is more complex. Behaving like a gentleman is almost a Zen exercise, as the key to acting like a gentleman is not seeming to care if you are acting like a gentleman. That may seem like a paradox, but it's actually the heart of the upper-class mentality: not letting yourself be governed by what other people might think. An individual who behaves according to accepted etiquette as a sign of respect for others is being a gentleman; a person who is fanatical about manners because he wants people to think he's a gentleman is an impostor.

Keeping track of who is and who isn't a gentleman or lady isn't as hard as one might think, because upper-class society (at least within a given nation) is fairly small and insular. Everyone knows everyone else, or at least has an acquaintance in common.

#### CC Honor and Duty

In the Steam Age, people still take ideas like Honor and Duty very seriously. The codes of honorable conduct may be a little toned down since the days of chivalry, but they are still very strict. The typical Gentleman's code of honor in New Europa has the following elements:

#### DD Always Keep Your Word

Ladies and gentlemen never break their word. They keep promises, abide by oaths and vows, and never betray a trust. The flip side is also important — a true gentleman doesn't give his word lightly, or promise things he can't deliver. Breaking one's word is certain to lead to disgrace if anyone ever finds out.

#### DD Tell the Truth

Lying is a form of breaking your word. Gentlemen never lie — unless it is to preserve the honor or good name of another. If a gentleman was caught having an affair, he would lie to protect his partner's reputation, not his own. Lying to benefit oneself is the mark of a rogue and a cad, not a gentleman. Steam Age ladies and gentlemen even go to great lengths to avoid telling lies to enemies.

#### DD Be Brave

Courage is an essential part of being a lady or a gentleman. Courage can be both physical and moral. Physical courage means remaining calm in the face of danger, not allowing others to threaten or intimidate one, and a willingness to risk harm to accomplish one's goals. Moral courage means standing up for what is right, no matter what the cost.

#### DD Defend Your Honor

Honor and courage combined mean that gentlemen and ladies are expected to defend their honor. Insults cannot go unanswered, as that is the mark of a coward. This doesn't mean one should go around picking fights — if one is insulted, one naturally gives the transgressor the opportunity to apologize. But if no apology is forthcoming, honor must be defended by fisticuffs or a duel.

#### DD Defend Others

Being one of the ruling class has its responsibilities, and the chief one is defending those who are unable to do so themselves. This doesn't mean protecting everyone, but it does mean that the weak, the elderly, the poor and all women and children should be defended to the best of a gentleman's ability. To some extent this is simply part of having moral courage as described above.

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### CC Dressing the Part

One of the ways that people of the Steam Age navigate the complex waters of social class is by dressing appropriately. The clothes one wears advertise to the world one's status and position. One of the secrets to being a master of disguise like Sherlock Holmes is simply paying attention to the way people dress, and being willing to "dress down."

Starting at the top, everyone wears hats. Upper class and professional men wear silk top hats in the city, tweed caps for fishing, deerstalkers ("Sherlock Holmes hats") for hunting, Tyrolean hats for mountaineering and boaters for boating. Artistic gentlemen may affect a soft felt "trilby."

Middle-class men in the business and tradesman classes wear bowler hats almost exclusively. Lower-class men wear a mix of flat caps, high-crowned bowlers called "billycock" hats, and old-fashioned or beat-up versions of upper-class headgear. Soldiers wear an impressive variety of shakos, kepis and helmets, depending on their nationality and regiment.

Upper-class ladies wear wide-brimmed "picture" hats, or versions of men's hats "feminized" with ribbons and bows. Middle-class women either try to imitate them or else wear old-fashioned bonnets. Lower-class women, like lower-class men, wear hats bought second-hand. Women servants wear white "mob caps," which were standard headgear for all women a century earlier.

On the body, gentlemen dress in silk or linen shirts with detachable collars. At a formal dinner they add a starched shirtfront. During the day, gentlemen wear frock coats and trousers. When not in the city, they dress appropriately — tweeds for hunting or blazers and flannel trousers for boating or sports. German gentlemen sometimes wear loden jackets when outdoors, or lederhosen in summertime. In the evening gentlemen wear tail coats and white tie, though Prince Edward of England has recently invented a new kind of formal wear called a "dinner jacket" (Americans know it as a "Tuxedo").

Middle-class men wear suits, and as one goes down the social scale the colors and patterns get brighter. Their shirts are cotton, or else second-hand linen shirts. Lower-class men work in shirtsleeves, often wearing shirts of rough flannel and work pants of bluecanvas, but are likely to own a single suit for Sundays. Servants wear uniforms, generally based on gentlemen's clothing of the previous century, although coachmen proudly wear their tall top hats.

Ladies wear blouses and skirts for ordinary wear, or dresses with a jacket. Skirts reach to the ground, and have a "bustle" at the hips and rear.

Blouses are similar to men's shirts. A shawl or cape is common in rain or cold weather.

Undergarments are complicated. Men wear cotton (or wool!) drawers and vests, or even a full "union suit" from ankles to wrists. Ladies wear stockings which come above the knee and "pantalettes" (a New European fad

much more common there than in our own history). Above that comes the corset (which gets its own sidebar on p.00). Brassieres haven't been invented yet.

Shoes are relatively simple and uniform. Nearly everyone wears high-button shoes with pointed toes. Ladies' shoes have higher heels than men's, but are generally the same. For riding one wears boots, and many sports have special footgear — cork-soled shoes for bicycling, rubber-soled ones for tennis, and so on.

### SB Dueling

Duels are a Steam Age survival of the old ritual of trial by combat. The point of a duel is that one is willing to defend one's honor even at the risk of injury or death. Duels are much less common than in previous eras, and are against the law almost everywhere. But custom is strong, and in most places the authorities wink at a private affair of honor, and are likely to become involved only if someone is killed.

A duel begins with an insult (real or imagined) to a gentleman or to something he feels obligated to defend — his family, his country, or a lady. Insults can take many forms: verbal insults, laughing at someone, accusations of cheating or wrongdoing, or some act like eloping with someone's sister.

The insulted party issues a challenge. This is usually done face to face, though one might send a friend to issue the challenge if tempers are running high. Declining a challenge is to admit one has behaved dishonorably, and one who does so risks being branded a coward, a cad or both. (If the insult is obviously absurd or fabricated, it is possible to decline it without dishonor.) It is important to note that one only challenges or accepts challenge from one's social equal, though the definition of an equal is pretty broad — anyone within two Status levels of one's own is considered an equal. When dealing with an obvious social inferior a duel isn't necessary; horsewhipping is the preferred method to deal with an upstart.

Once the challenge is accepted, friends of the duellists known as seconds arrange the details of the meeting. (Among the middle and lower classes, the combatants often dispense with this part and just get straight to the fight.) The seconds determine when and where the duel will take place, what weapons will be used, and how far the fight will go.

Duels usually take place outdoors, often on the outskirts of the city in which the combatants live. The Bois de Boulogne near Paris is a favorite venue. In America the duellists often cross a state line to reduce the possibility of official interference. Dawn is a favored time, because the duel won't be disturbed at that hour.

Weapons vary widely. In France nearly all duels are fought with rapiers. Military officers generally use their normal sidearms, either swords or

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pistols depending on the service. Britons and Americans prefer pistols. In Latin America and Antillea knives are common. But the possibilities are almost endless — duels have been fought with shotguns, axes, machetes, crossbows, and even sledgehammers. Inventors in the Steam Age might decide to duel with Giant Steam Automata or Lightning–Projectors.

Duels can be fought to first blood, to serious injury, or a l'outrance — to the death. "First Blood" requires a real injury, more than just a scratch. In game terms, it means a hit doing at least 1 point of damage to the character after all Damage Reduction has taken effect. Duels to first blood are the most common, and almost never attract legal attention. Serious injury in a duel is a wound which effectively incapacitates the character. A hit which cripples the weapon arm, makes it impossible to stand, or renders the character unconscious is a serious injury. A fight to serious injury indicates strong feelings in the matter, and may result in a police investigation.

Duels to the death are very rare. They occur only when the insult has been absolutely intolerable and deliberate, or when the duellists are old enemies already. A duel to the death is exactly what it sounds like — only one person will leave the field of honor alive. In almost any nation the police will investigate it as a case of murder, and the winner may find himself facing the death penalty.

The actual duel is no mere brawl. The combatants take their positions and await a signal. In a gun duel, they usually stand ten or twenty paces apart, and fire at the drop of a handkerchief. In sword duels they stand six feet apart and begin either at the drop of a handkerchief or a verbal signal. Duellists can wear whatever they choose, though armor is not allowed unless it has been agreed upon in advance. Many duellists choose to fight stripped to the waist, as it allows free movement and reduces the risk of infection.

After the duel the combatants are expected to bury their hostility. The matter of honor has been settled, and nobody has any cause for a grievance. While it may be a bit much to expect gentlemen who have traded potshots at each other to become friends, they should give each other all due courtesy. Failure to do so would be an insult — and possibly grounds for a duel.

### CC Officers and Gentlemen

War is still considered a glorious business in the Steam Age. Memories of the great campaigns of the Napoleonic Wars are strong, and most recent conflicts have been relatively quick, with limited casualties. British and French soldiers have racked up easy victories against poorly–equipped natives in Africa and Asia, and the long bloody American Civil War is still considered an aberration rather than a preview of the future of warfare.

Military life is still considered glamorous.

The armies of New Europa are still mostly built around regiments — bodies

of about a thousand men, commanded by a colonel. In most armies the regiment is the largest permanent formation, and are assembled into larger units on an ad hoc basis during wartime. Only the Prussians have a standing corps organization, though many of their neighbors are moving towards a similar system. Two or more regiments make a brigade, under a brigadier general. A division is made up of several brigades, and is commanded by a full general. In conflicts between modern armies, the division is becoming the primary tactical unit. Several divisions combined make up a corps, and multiple corps make an army. Only the largest nations can field more than a single army, so they are usually commanded by the King or the commander-in-chief himself.

Soldiers in the Steam Age carry rifles tipped with bayonets. In modern armies like those of Prussia and France, the rifles are breech-loading bolt-action weapons. Old-fashioned forces like the Austrian and Spanish armies still use muzzle-loading guns, but in the wake of the devastating Prussian successes of the past decades most powers are scrambling to convert their armies to breech-loaders. Cavalry soldiers are still armed with lances and sabers, though some units have adopted pistols or breech-loading carbines for actual fighting. Officers carry pistols and swords, and still are expected to lead from the front.

Uniforms are still ornate and impractical, with lots of gold braid, shiny brass buttons, silvered helmets and breastplates, and plumed hats.

Regiments have their own distinctive uniforms, and the idea of a standard national uniform is still considered a radical reform. Only the Americans have a single uniform for their entire army. Uniforms are supposed to be visible — camouflage isn't the goal. Officers have to be able to see their men, so uniforms are very visible and distinctive.

In Continental armies there are fashionable and unfashionable regiments. Members of the Upper Classes vie with each other to get places in the fashionable ones, leaving the unfashionable regiments for the Middle Classes. Note that even in Great Britain, where the Navy is the keystone of the nation's military power, service in the Navy isn't considered fashionable, nor are units like the Engineers or Artillery where technical skill is required. Since generals and staff officers are often drawn from the elite fashionable regiments, this creates the dangerous situation that armies are being led by officers who don't know very much about modern weapons and warfare.

Almost every army has a significant number of nonhumans in service, with the sole exception being the Prussian army. Dragons seldom care to get involved in human battles (the Second Compact's stand against Prussia at Konigsseig was a notable exception). Dwarfs and Faerie, however, often serve alongside humans in battle. Dwarfs are becoming increasingly common in armies and navies as technology becomes more important. Battleships now routinely have a gruff Dwarf chief engineer, and the engineering and

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artillery corps have substantial numbers of Dwarfs in them. By contrast, Faerie are becoming less common in human armies. Once just about every army had its regiment of Faerie flying cavalry, mounted on Phooka horses. Sadly, the increasing use of iron is driving them from the battlefield. In the past, a few swords or helmets weren't enough to bother the Faerie troops, but now huge concentrations of iron in artillery parks, thousands of steel rifles, and fragments of steel shrapnel make a modern battlefield a very dangerous place to be a Faerie.

### SB Fashionable Regiments of New Europa

The following regiments are considered the most exclusive and fashionable, and are made up almost entirely of members of the gentry and nobility. Each entry also includes a brief description of the regiment's uniform.

#### Great Britain

Coldstream Guards (Infantry): Red coat with blue trim, dark blue pants with a red stripe.

Life Guards (Mixed): Red coat, blue trousers with a red stripe, white helmet.

Royal Horse Guards (Cavalry): Blue tunic, white pants, bearskin shako, silver cuirasse.

Seventh Irish Lancers (Flying Cavalry; open to Faerie only): Grey tunic with silver frogging, shako.

#### Prussia

Cuirassiers (Cavalry): Blue coat with gold trim, black trousers.

Garde du Corps (Cavalry): Blue coat with red collar, black pants, black pickelhaube.

#### France

Chasseurs FÈes (Flying Cavalry; Faerie only): Sky blue tunic with gold frogging, red pants, kepi.

8th Hussars (Cavalry): Brown tunic with silver frogging, red pants, shako or kepi.

Imperial Guard (Mixed): Green tunic, red pants, black shako.

#### Bayern

1st Faerie Lancers (Flying Cavalry; Faerie only): Grey-blue tunic with gold trim, black pants, silvered bronze helmet.

Royal Guard (Cavalry): Blue tunic with gold trim, dark blue pants.

#### Russia

Chevaliers Guardes (Cavalry): Green jacket, gray pants, gilded helmet

Garde Arcane (Faerie Cavalry): Black greatcoat with silver trim, black pants, kepi.

### SB In The Navy

While one may speak of "navies" of the Steam Age, there is really only one.

The Royal Navy of Great Britain is the most powerful force afloat by a staggering margin. The British follow the "two-power standard," attempting

to keep their navy equal to any two other fleets combined. At present, none of the other Great Powers are inclined to challenge British dominance, so fleets are fairly modest in size.

The backbone of the British fleet are the Dreadnoughts, slow but heavily—armored ships, armed with powerful breech—loading cannon mounted in retractable turrets. No other navy has ships which can match them. Slightly older and less powerful are ironclad battleships, usually driven by paddle—wheels and covered in iron plate. France and Prussia maintain a few ironclads, in part for their simple prestige value. Monitors are small, very slow and unseaworthy ironclads intended for coast defense and bombardment.

A few old sail—driven wooden ships of the line are still in service, particularly in the Austrian and Russian navies, and in the American fleet. Against any modern opponent they are completely useless, but they look very handsome sailing along with all sails set.

Cruisers are designed for long—range patrols, commerce raiding, showing the flag in colonial waters, and piracy suppression. They are not meant to stand up to battleships, and have powerful guns but thin armor. All navies have at least a few cruisers, but the French have made them the center of their naval doctrine — if they can't fight the British fleet, they'll build a navy of cruisers and harass their enemies to death.

Torpedo boats are the lightest and most agile vessels of the Steam Age, and carry a deadly sting in their clockwork torpedoes. The major navies are still trying to come up with an effective defense against them — the major alternatives are piling on the armor, or else arming the battleships with lots of light quick—firing guns to sink the torpedo boats before they can get close enough to attack. The French are working on a submarine torpedo boat, a notion which gives the British Sea Lords hives when they think about it, so they try not to.

#### BB A Woman's Place

The role of women in the Steam Age is complex. To modern eyes it appears that they are second—class citizens in a male—dominated world, but that is a misleading oversimplification. Men and women in the Steam Age are responsible for different spheres of activity. Men run businesses, governments and armies. Women are in charge of home and social life. On the surface this appears to be an uneven division: women rule inside the home, men get the entire rest of the world. But social influence is an important "currency" in the Steam Age, and can have a tremendous influence on one's success in business or government. Just as a woman without a husband is at a disadvantage because she has nobody to support her, a single man is also at a penalty because he has nobody to "network" for him. The position of women in New Europa is a bit freer than in our own history because of the influence of the Faerie. Faerie women aren't bound by any



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human social conventions, and consequently have been an example of "female liberation" to their human sisters. Essentially women's rights are about a generation ahead of where they were in our own history — much more like the 1890s than the 1870s of our world.

One sphere of activity which is female dominated is Magick. Sorcerous Talent appears to be more common among women than among men (or at least more women go on to develop their abilities). Women hold important positions in most of the Sorcerous Orders, and consequently wield a lot of power behind the scenes of New Europa.

### CC Adventurous Ladies

Ladies who follow all the conventions of polite society can lead adventurous lives, without having to give up the advantages of their sex.

Upper-class ladies are the most adventurous, routinely travelling to exotic parts of the world and engaging in strenuous pursuits like mountain-climbing, big game hunting and the like.

Middle-class ladies may actually have more opportunities for adventure than their well-born sisters. In the great colonial empires of Britain and France, upper-class gentlemen in colonial service leave their families at home, but middle-class households often relocate to places like Algiers, India, Hong Kong, the Caribbean or the East Indies. The wife of a middle-class Army officer or railroad builder may find herself having to cope with wild tigers, monsoons, native uprisings, epidemics or volcanoes — and still keep up a properly respectable household. If her husband is away, or gets injured or killed, a colonial wife suddenly becomes the personification of Empire for a large region, and has to maintain order, resolve disputes and keep the wheels of Progress running.

The lower classes make up the bulk of those who go to America, Antillea or Australia in search of a new life, and a girl from London's slums or the German countryside may find herself a pioneering settler wife. Women on the frontier have a good deal more freedom than those back in New Europa, but may also have to learn to handle a six-shooter or a shotgun.

### CC Adventuresses

The role of Adventuresses is without parallel in our history. An Adventuress in New Europa is a woman who chooses to live by her sword and her wits; a female soldier of fortune. Essentially she trades the social protection of being "the weaker sex" for the opportunity to succeed or fail by her own efforts. Since most armies don't have women soldiers (not officially, anyway), Adventuresses must make their way as mercenaries, guards, spies or assassins. Those with some independent income of their own can simply go about in search of excitement rather than fighting for pay. Being an Adventuress isn't so much a career as the term for a type of woman. There are no entry requirements and no training school for

Adventuresses. They are a diverse group — some are married, some widowed, some single, some scandalously involved in romantic affairs. Even those with children don't seem to let that slow them down much (a reliable governess is a big help).

Adventuresses are rare, even in the world of GURPS Castle Falkenstein, and many tradition-minded people are a bit shocked by their conduct, but they have the acceptance of the leaders of Society, and that's what matters.

#### CC The Demimonde

By contrast, the ladies of the Demimonde occupy a role which had its parallels in our own history, yet which modern readers have the hardest time understanding. First of all, a Demimondaine isn't a prostitute.

Perhaps a better description would be "professional mistress." Most Demimondaines have a handful of gentleman admirers, and live on gifts from them. Perhaps the best way to understand the role of the Demimondaine is to keep in mind the social importance of not working for a living. Just as a barrister is socially superior to a solicitor because solicitors charge fees to their clients while barristers accept an honorarium, a Demimondaine isn't a prostitute because she accepts gifts instead of charging money. The fact that many of those gifts find their way to the pawnshop to be turned into cash doesn't affect the Demimondaine's status.

Moreover, a Demimondaine is more than a mere bed-partner. They are cultivated, charming women, skilled hostesses and delightful conversationalists. They are almost the New European equivalent of Japanese geishas. Most importantly, their favors are their own to give or withhold; a Demimondaine is entirely her own woman.

France is the center of Demimondaine society. The ladies of the Left Bank in Paris are by far the most accomplished and delightful of New Europa's Demimondaines. Cabinet ministers, noblemen, generals and leaders of industry are among their lovers. Many foreign gentlemen keep a mistress in Paris. The Demimondaines of Paris are celebrities — some even lend their names to commercial endorsements for beauty products.

Elsewhere the Demimonde is more discreet. In England they tend to be married ladies of the lower reaches of the gentry, or actresses. In Vienna the most celebrated Demimondaines are opera singers or dancers. America has no Demimonde as such, though an equivalent does exist among the octoroon ladies of New Orleans.

#### SB Corsets

Corsets are the primary undergarment for women in the Steam Age. They shape a woman's waist and support her bust, and are made of silk or cotton with stays of whalebone or steel. Corsets are essential for the hourglass shape which is thought to be the epitome of female beauty in the Steam Age, and are worn by women of all social classes.

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Corsets lace up the back, which makes them almost impossible to put on without help. If the wearer is trying to make her waist thinner, a fair amount of force is needed to get the corset laced! Ladies and gentlemen planning romantic adventures should recall that observant servants may notice if a corset has been relaxed and re-tied.

There is no denying that a corset restricts one's movements and breathing. One reason women in the Victorian era fainted so frequently may have been chronic oxygen deprivation. In GURPS terms, there is a -2 penalty to all Physical skills involving bodily agility, including most Athletic skills and any unarmed or melee combat skills. Ranged weapon skills, formal dancing, and any skills which depend on manual dexterity are not affected. In addition, corseted women double the Fatigue cost of any physical activity.

On the bright side, corsets make pretty good armor. There's an account of a frontier woman who survived an Indian raid because their arrows couldn't penetrate her corset! An expensive silk and whalebone corset is PD1 DR1 protection on locations 9-11; a cheaper cotton and steel one is PD2 DR2! A corset generally weighs one or two pounds.

BB The Social Whirl

CC The Season

For anyone in the Upper Classes, the year is arranged around a series of major social events, collectively known as "The Season." The precise dates of the Season are different depending on where one lives, and with a good calendar and a taste for travel a determined socialite can spend the entire year in an endless series of parties and balls. Social events are more than just diversions for the elite of New Europa, they are perfect opportunities for discreet political and diplomatic maneuvering, ideal venues for romantic escapades, and occasionally the cover for espionage and crime. January begins Fasching, the Carnival season in Vienna. From January 6 until Shrove Tuesday, the Viennese occupy themselves with balls and masquerades. Venice, New Orleans and Rio de Janeiro have equally elaborate Carnival seasons. January is also the start of the hunting season in Britain, and reckless aristocrats can virtually live in the saddle riding to hounds. American society's winter season winds up with Mrs. Astor's exclusive ball for the Four Hundred.

February sees the winding-down of the Russian and Parisian social seasons. Landed nobles start heading back to their estates to oversee the spring planting.

March is usually the climax of Carnival and Fasching, depending on when Shrove Tuesday actually falls. Afterwards society in most Catholic countries becomes somewhat subdued as the people observe the Lenten fast until Easter.

In April the hunting season ends in Britain, and the London social season

begins. This is the time of year for young nobles to be presented at Court. Artistic sorts gravitate to Paris for the opening of the new art show at the Ecole des Beaux Arts.

May sees London society kick into high gear with the opening of Parliament and the Derby Day horse races. For the next few months all the English aristocracy will be living in London, hosting balls and parties, and conducting most of the nation's business over cigars after dinner.

June begins with graduation ceremonies at Eton and other exclusive schools, releasing a flood of eligible bachelors on the social scene. The Ascot horse races mark the high point of the English social season. Americans likewise flock to races at Saratoga Springs. The most important Faerie festival comes at Midsummer Night, with the great dance of the Faerie Courts. On that night the Faerie Veil is at its thinnest. Few mortals are invited to join the unearthly revelry, and it is a signal honor to have attended.

July sees the end of the English social season with the Goodwood races. London is getting too hot and smelly for entertaining, and the nobility are all heading for more pleasant surroundings. Cannes and Monaco on the French Riviera are popular destinations at this time of year, as is Bath. The Emperor of Austria traditionally goes to the spas at Bad Ischl in July.

August sees London and Paris almost abandoned by the upper classes. This is the height of yachting season, with Regatta Week at Cowes (near Southampton). Bad sailors may prefer to head for Scotland to hunt grouse.

In September the German spa season gets underway as people flock to Weisbaden, Baden–Baden, Marienbad and other German hot springs to take the waters. Ostensibly this is to recover from the excesses of summer, but the spa–goers have turned it into a mini–season with its own excesses. In the Bear Flag Empire of California September marks Emperor Norton's Forty–Niner Ball, at which the leaders of Californian society engage in boisterous and eccentric amusements.

October is the time to be in Germany. Prussia and Bayern go wild over Oktoberfest, a harvest festival with plenty of beer and wine. Vienna celebrates with hunting in the Vienna Woods, and in England the shooting season is in full swing.

November sees the Russian social season begin, as nobles gather in St. Petersburg to fight the winter cold with vodka, parties, vodka, ice palaces, vodka, operas and vodka. November also sees the high point of Dragon social activity, with the great annual Dragons' Convocation in Rome. Dragons from around the world gather to exchange gifts, compare collections, and share gossip. The social season in New York begins with lots of coming–out parties.

In December the English upper classes return to London for the winter term of Parliament, creating a mini–social season for the politically well–connected. The Bayernese social season gets underway with the annual

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Yule Ball at Castle Falkenstein, which is always attended by the Faerie Court.

### CC House-Parties

The basic social event for the upper classes in New Europa is the house party. This is more than just a keg and some chips in the den. A house party is the Normandy Invasion of parties.

To host a house party one must have a house — a big house. A country manor house can have as many as a hundred rooms. Which is good because house parties generally involve a lot of guests, and all those guests are going to bring their personal servants. Typical house parties can go on for days, which means all those people are going to be spending the night. House parties are exclusively an upper-class affair because nobody else can afford to have them.

The festivities usually begin on a Thursday or Friday afternoon as guests arrive, either by train or in their own carriages, and the party officially kicks off with a formal dinner that evening. After dinner the ladies and gentlemen separate, with the men going to the smoking room to drink brandy, tell bawdy stories and discuss politics while the ladies retire to the parlor to do essentially the same thing (though in a much more refined manner). Once that's done with, the men rejoin the women for coffee and tea, followed by parlor games — whist, charades, or Tom Olam's new invention, role-playing games.

After the fun is over, the guests head off to bed, and this brings up one of the reasons house parties are so popular in the Steam Age: they are ideal venues for a discreet love affair. After bedtime there is a certain amount of silent foot traffic in the halls as guests rearranged themselves, a process repeated at dawn to preserve appearances.

Breakfasts at a country house weekend are apt to be casual, with guests drifting in as they wake up, sometimes as late as ten. Those interested in hunting or fishing may get an early start, but for everyone else relaxation is part of the fun. During the day guests might go on a picnic if the weather is good, perhaps visit some local points of interest, or else stay in and write letters. At teatime everyone starts assembling again, after which they retire to their rooms to get ready for dinner.

The length of a house party can be anything from a long weekend to an extended visit of a month or so. Given the upper-class code of hospitality, it is sometimes difficult to tell when an actual party ends and the ordinary complement of guests begins.

### BB Romance

The Steam Age of New Europa is a very romantic time. The "stiff upper lip" is only for when you're looking Death in the eye. Gentlemen and ladies alike are moved to tears by music and grow rapturous over scenic views. So

when love is involved, passions can run very strongly indeed. The world of GURPS Castle Falkenstein is a world of romance in every sense of the word, and romantic love is a key part.

As with nearly everything else, romance is affected by social class. For one thing, relationships are always expected to remain within one's own class. Women can hope to "marry up" — a wealthy professional's daughter attracting an insolvent gentleman, for example — but generally the Upper Classes marry among themselves, and the Middle and Lower Classes are likewise exclusive.

In upper-class society, marriages tend to be as much business mergers as the joining of two souls. A proposal is accompanied by a lot of frank and fairly mercenary discussion of dowries, separate property for the bride, and the groom's prospects for inheritance. Middle-class marriages are a bit less complicated, though the bride and her family naturally want to make sure she will be properly supported. Courtship in the middle and upper classes was heavily supervised. Young couples were not allowed to be together without an escort, usually a female relative of the girl. This was less true among the lower classes, if only because all the available women were probably busy working or keeping house. Lower-class couples could and did live together before marriage. Among the lower classes marriage for love or at least companionship is possible simply because both partners in a marriage will still need to work hard to keep fed.

Of course, marriage and love are not necessarily the same thing. While marriage is restricted by class and property, love (or sheer physical desire) are not, and affairs can and do cross class lines. Upper-class gentlemen seducing housemaids is practically a cliché, and more than a few upper-class women had dalliances with handsome footmen. In general, though, love affairs tend to be among people of the same class, if only because they are more likely to move in the same circles and have the same tastes and interests.

The middle classes were probably the least likely to have affairs. They lacked opportunity, and were the most fervently moral and religious. Among the lower classes, husbands and wives were more likely to have married for love, so adulterous affairs were less common than premarital ones. The real champions of adultery were the upper classes, who practiced a code of unspoken tolerance. The chief rule was that women were expected to present their husbands with "an heir and a spare" before doing any serious fooling around.

Nonhuman attitudes are a bit different. To Dragons, the whole concept of marriage is absurd. They may form attachments with humans, but never consider themselves to be tied to a single partner. Since Dragons are well able to provide for their mates, they seldom have trouble finding willing partners. Most human societies tacitly consider the mates of Dragons to be married, and ignore the scandalous aspects of Dragon behavior (it wouldn't

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do any good to complain about it anyway).

Dwarfs are probably the most human-like in their attitudes about love and romance. They are generally faithful husbands to their Faerie wives, even if the reverse isn't true. Dwarfs don't have the human obsession with chastity, and consider many human romantic customs to be foolish and a waste of time. They do take a dim view of seducers, though — anyone trifling with a Dwarf's Faerie daughters had better be ready to make a commitment.

The Faerie themselves have a very casual attitude about romantic matters. Love is a game to them, and they only play it when it amuses them. They have even more affairs than upper-class humans. Sometimes, though, love will catch a Faerie by surprise, and turn what would otherwise be a casual dalliance into a serious romance. Just about all loves between Faerie and mortals have an element of tragedy in them, because the humans are doomed to grow old and die while their Faerie lover remains forever young.

One exception to the free and open Faerie attitude is their reaction to infidelity or abandonment. Even in a casual love affair, the mortal partner is expected to be faithful and devoted until the Faerie decides to break things off. A mortal who cheats on a Faerie lover has made a powerful enemy, who may well decide to ruin the mortal's life as punishment.

### SB True Love

The epitome of romance is True Love. In the world of GURPS Castle Falkenstein nobody wants to have a "relationship" or a "domestic partnership." Nobody wants to get married for the tax break. The only kind of love around is True Love. True Love is the intense, stronger-than-death kind of love. It's the sort of obsessive, single-minded devotion which our less romantic age considers grounds for restraining orders and psychiatric care.

For characters who have found their True Love, it is the ultimate motive. If your True Love needs a rare herb that grows only on the slopes of the Himalayas, you set out for Tibet without a moment's delay. If your True Love is kidnapped by a Master Villain, then either you or the villain is going to die. And if your True Love loves another . . . then you keep it to yourself and never speak of it (except perhaps with your dying breath).

In game terms, True Love can be represented either by a Dependent or by an Obsession. A Dependent is best if the character is married or engaged to the True Love, or at least both are aware of the relationship. If the character has not yet declared his (or her) undying love, or is keeping it a secret because the True Love is married to another, then it would be a -5 or -10 point Obsession.

### SB Fates Worse Than Death

One fixture of Nineteenth-century melodramas was villains threatening

heroines with a "fate worse than death!" So what is a fate worse than death, anyway?

Rape, usually (the more proper term was that the woman was "outraged" or "violated"). Because of the tremendous importance attached to a woman's virtue, even a victim of forcible rape was considered somehow "fallen" or dishonored. She might be unable to secure respectable employment or marry afterwards. Depending on her social station and the attitudes of her family and friends, a woman might actually prefer death.

If that's too ugly for your GURPS Castle Falkenstein campaign, a fairly close equivalent is for a woman to be married against her will. The folks in the Steam Age take marriage seriously; if you're married to someone, you're really married to him, even if you can't stand them and only said "I do" because he was threatening to unleash a deadly swarm of poison locusts on Paris if you refused. Divorce is rare and usually requires proof of infidelity; the mere fact that your husband is a wretch or a Master Villain isn't enough.

Of course, in a GURPS Castle Falkenstein adventure, fates worse than death should always remain threats. The heroes burst in to rescue the unfortunate girl before the marriage is complete — or the heroine pulls her hidden derringer and arrests the villain while his accomplice tries to puzzle out the marriage service. If by some mischance the last-minute rescue fails and the wedding is a success, then either the Criminal Mastermind should be redeemed by True Love, or else the heroine can discover a previously hidden talent for Master Villainy and find happiness with her partner in crime.

#### CC Romance in the Campaign

Gamemasters who want to introduce romantic plots and subplots into their GURPS Castle Falkenstein campaign must take into account the preferences and personalities of the players. If the players all prefer mowing down hordes of Prussians to "mushy stuff" then there's no point in trying to force a romance down their throats.

There are three possible romantic alignments in a roleplaying game: non-player characters in love with other NPCs, player characters in love with NPCs, and PCs in love with other PCs. Obviously, the Gamemaster can control everything about an NPC romance — they can be hopeless cases of one person in love with someone who disdains him, convention-breaking romances across class or species lines, or picture-perfect romances which some evildoer is determined to ruin.

Romances involving player characters are a bit more difficult, because they depend on the player's choices. Gamemasters should provide characters with opportunities to fall in love, but it's usually a bad idea to have it happen against the player's will. A temporary seduction is one thing (pitting the seducer's Sex Appeal skill against the character's willpower), but a long-term relationship can't really be handled with die rolls.



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### BB The Underworld

Crime has undergone a revolution as dramatic as any of the other social changes of the Steam Age. In the past, the only ongoing "professional" criminal activities were highway robbery and smuggling. The growth of cities, the birth of an affluent middle class, and the rise of new technologies have made a whole range of new crimes possible.

Who are the criminals of the Steam Age? They come from a range of social classes. The bulk of them are from the bottom of the social ladder, but the growth of the middle class has seen the birth of the "white collar" criminal. And even among the Upper Classes there are a few who break the laws, either out of simple greed, or the thrill of getting away with it, or deeper motives.

### CC Crimes

What do criminals do in the world of Castle Falkenstein? The short answer is "anything to make a buck." Steam Age crimes are mostly property crimes, taking advantage of society's new wealth of material goods. Crimes of violence are, as always, mostly personal affairs, although criminal gangs do use force to keep their members in line. Efforts by reformers to use laws to prevent various social ills have only created new illegal markets for them. And among the Anarchists and other revolutionaries there exists a whole world of political crime.

The most prevalent crime in the Steam Age is theft. At the bottom of society, many of the poor live by scavenging, and when you're hungry and desperate, the dividing line between finding something and stealing something is awfully tenuous. The simplest thieves steal from shops, snatch clothing from clotheslines, and filch things off windowsills in warm weather. Pickpockets and purse-snatchers work crowds, making off with pocketbooks, watches and ladies' handbags. Skilled burglars break into homes to steal valuable items like silverware and jewelry, often while the owners are asleep. Safecrackers break into bank vaults and railway safes using nitroglycerine. On the docks of London and other port cities, organized gangs pilfer cargo.

For anything but the simplest kinds of theft, a fence is required. A burglar may get away with a fortune in silverware, or a safecracker may get banknotes worth millions, but without a reliable fence there isn't much the thieves can do with their loot. An obviously lower-class individual walking into a bank with a wad of notes or bonds would quickly attract police attention. Fences often function as the leaders and organizers of criminal gangs, picking targets to rob and arranging for disposal of the goods. Robbery is a bit more dangerous than theft. Since a great many gentlemen go armed, robbery requires a fairly large group of criminals to overawe and intimidate the victims. The best targets for armed robbery are isolated,

contain substantial wealth, and have only a few defenders. Stagecoaches and trains are good, because they often carry government payrolls or postal orders, and have only a small crew. The difficulty is getting them to stop. Piracy is a specialized form of robbery, and in the Steam Age is undergoing a renaissance as dirigible-borne aerial pirates make use of the speed and range of their airships to prey on shipping. Like thieves, robbers and pirates need a market for the things they steal; for aerial pirates the Free State of Orleans or various Latin American republics fit that role nicely.

Murder is still considered the most heinous of crimes, and is sure to attract the attention of police and Consulting Detectives alike. The Steam Age in New Europa has seen a great change in how murders are committed. Where once murders were usually fairly simple, nowadays murderers try to devise unusual and hard-to-detect means of killing, as a way to confuse and foil detectives.

A kind of murder which has become regrettably common in the past couple of decades is political assassination. Assassins seldom both with subtlety, relying either on suicidal determination to get their victim, or else on devastating weapons like bombs or Infernal Devices. The targets of political assassins and anarchists are usually monarchs, presidents, government leaders or prominent businessmen.

Murder and mayhem are not a large part of the stock in trade of criminal gangs, as there's little profit in it. Murderers tend to be either amateurs driven by greed or emotion, or else madmen. Gangs do use violence to keep members in line, punish informers and intimidate the victims of "protection" rackets. It is rumored that some members of the World Crime League have begun offering their services as assassins-for-hire, committing murder for pay, but it remains to be seen if that will be a profitable enterprise.

Perhaps the most degrading of all criminal enterprises is the business of prostitution. In London alone there are fifty thousand fallen women plying their trade, and other great cities of New Europa have their own in like numbers. Like everything else in Steam Age society, there is a hierarchy among prostitutes. At the bottom are streetwalkers, trading a few minutes of intimacy in an alley or doorway for enough money to buy gin and a bed for the night. The more successful ones work in bordellos, and may be able to earn enough to retire before their looks fade. At the top are the Demimondaines, whose favors are the preserve of noblemen and barons of industry.

A new form of crime has come to the attention of the authorities in the past few years. Unscrupulous Calculation Engineers have used their knowledge of Calculation Engines to enrich themselves by altering bank accounts, government records and other stores of information. Others have unlawfully gained access to Engine records about their fellow citizens and

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used the information for blackmail or other criminal purposes.

### CC Criminal Masterminds

Criminal Masterminds are to ordinary criminals what Otto von Bismarck is to a local politician. They have the intelligence, vision and organizational ability to turn criminal gangs into unstoppable underground armies. Such "Napoleons of Crime" fall into two main categories. The most common Masterminds are content to create Crime Trusts and reap the benefits of superior efficiency and economies of scale. The gang controls fences, robbers, bordellos, blackmailers, smugglers, forgers, crooked Calculation Engineers and a handful of trained killers. Goods stolen by the thieves can be sold through the fences. Patrons of the bordellos can be marked down for squeezing by the blackmailers. Forgers can create spurious permits for the smugglers. And the thugs and killers can make sure nobody starts talking to the police. For the low-level crook, membership in a Mastermind's organization creates security: there's no need to worry that your fence may turn you in, or that the girls at the fancy house will pass the word to the coppers if you brag a little. Less money is wasted in stolen property that can't be fenced or smuggled goods that have to be abandoned. The greater profits find their way into the Mastermind's pocket, and can pay for barristers, bail and tickets to Brasil.

Somewhat more colorful are Criminal Masterminds whose ambitions reach beyond mere crime. To them, their underworld empires are merely a means to an end. Such Masterminds are often of a scientific bent, and may make use of one or more fantastic inventions. Their motives range from desire for political power to personal grudges to warped altruism. In practice, their criminal organizations function much like those of more materialistic Masterminds, but the profits are plowed into some larger projects — an Infernal Device, an army of fanatics, or controlling interests in major industries. These Masterminds are more likely to betray and abandon their minions, and often have to rely on foreigners or fanatics.

### SB Proper Rants

One of the distinguishing characteristics of a good Master Villain is the quality of his Rants. Common criminals don't Rant at all; they may make a few coarse jokes at their foes' expense, but speeches aren't really in their line. Masterminds tend to be intellectual sorts, and as such are likely to be long-winded. Given the slightest opportunity to lecture to a captive audience, the Criminal Mastermind will seize it with a vengeance, going off on a long melodramatic Rant.

The subject matter of the Rant depends on the personality and plans of the Mastermind. Politically-motivated sorts, like anarchists or fanatical Prussians, are naturally going to expound on their political ideas, often at great length. Phrases like "the blood of the oppressors will run ankle-deep in the streets!" are standard for political Rants. Masterminds with a personal grudge are probably glad for the opportunity to talk about

how they have been wronged, and how terrible their vengeance will be. Quoting the old Spanish proverb that "Revenge is a dish best served cold" is practically required.

A subset of those Master Villains with a personal grudge are those mad scientists who feel compelled to demonstrate that their theories were correct by using some application of those theories to cause widespread devastation. "They laughed at me back at the University, the fools!" is a good start to a scientific rant, followed by a lot of self-congratulation about how nobody else could have created such a splendid Infernal Device and how nobody will ever discover the one tiny flaw in it.

Even Criminal Masterminds motivated entirely by greed are nevertheless prone to Ranting. Their Rants generally are about the incompetence of the authorities and how their plans are bound to succeed. "Your puny island is doomed!" is a common line, as is the inevitable (and invariably false) "Nothing can stop me now!"

Finally there are the Master Villains who really are crazy. They can be infallibly recognized by Rants which begin "You think me mad? Ha!" Usually the Villain then goes on to explain how sane he is, demonstrating in the process that he is a stone lunatic.

It is considered sporting in Criminal Mastermind circles to explain your insidious plot at length just before triggering the fiendish deathtrap which will destroy the heroes with agonizing slowness. Fast-acting deathtraps are only for eliminating your henchmen. And shooting the hero without a word of explanation is something to which no Master Villain would ever stoop. They have standards, you know.

#### SB Underworld Slang

The following terms were in use during the Victorian Era by criminals and the underworld. Obviously, these are all English words, mostly London criminal slang. Other nations had their own criminal jargon.

Abbess A female brothel keeper; a "Madam."

Abbot The husband or preferred man of an Abbess.

Barkers or Barking Irons Guns or pistols.

Beak Magistrate

Bearer-up One who robs men who have been decoyed by a woman accomplice.

Beef Thief (Cockney rhyming slang).

Bit Faker One who makes counterfeit coins.

Blag To steal or snatch, often by smash-and-grab.

Blow Inform to the police. A blower's life expectancy is likely to be short.

Bluebottle A policeman (because of their blue uniforms).

Broadring Cheating at cards; a "broadsman" is a card shark.

Bug-hunting Robbing drunks who have passed out on the street.

Cash Carrier A pimp or whore's minder, who keeps the money she earns.

Christen To remove identifying marks from stolen goods.

Coiner A coin counterfeiter.

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Cracksman A safecracker or lockpicking specialist.  
Demander A robber who works by intimidation.  
Dipper A pickpocket.  
Dollymop A prostitute, often an amateur or one who works part-time.  
Dragsman A thief who steals from carriages.  
Esclop A policeman (backwards slang).  
The Family The criminal Underworld.  
Flash house A public house patronized by criminals.  
Griddling Begging, peddling, or scrounging.  
Haymarket Hector A pimp (Haymarket Square was one of their haunts).  
Hoisting Shoplifting  
Irons Pistols or revolvers.  
Jack A police detective.  
Jemmy A lockpick or prybar used for breaking and entering.  
Jerryshop A pawnbroker's shop.  
Judy A prostitute or more generally, a woman.  
Kidsman An adult who runs a gang of child thieves; a Fagin.  
Lurker A beggar or a criminal who uses a beggar's disguise.  
Maltooler A pickpocket who steals from people aboard an omnibus or the Underground.  
Mark The victim of a theft or a fraud.  
Miltonian A policeman.  
Mobsmen A swindler or pickpocket, usually one who tries to resemble a gentleman.  
Mollisher A woman, especially the mistress of a criminal (a "moll").  
Mug-hunter A street robber or footpad.  
Nibbed Arrested.  
Nobble To hurt or maim; a "nobbler" was a professional thug.  
Nose A police spy or informer.  
Palmer A shoplifter or thief who works by "palming" items.  
Pig A policeman, usually a detective.  
Roller A thief who robs drunks or a prostitute who steals from her customers.  
Rookery A slum or ghetto, especially one inhabited by criminals.  
Scaldrum dodge Begging by means of fake or self-inflicted wounds.  
Srew A skeleton key; "screwing" means breaking and entering by picking locks.  
Sharp A crooked card-player or card cheat.  
Smasher A criminal who passes counterfeit money.  
Snoozer A thief who specializes in robbing rooms while the occupants are asleep.  
Snowing Stealing clothing and linens from clotheslines.  
Tea Leaf A thief (more rhyming slang).  
Toff A gentleman or someone dressed stylishly.  
Tooler A pickpocket.

Topping A public hanging.

### CC The Law

Society's first line of defense against common criminals and Masterminds alike are the police and the whole apparatus of courts, judges and prisons.

The rising crime levels created by the rapid growth of industrial cities has led to the creation of professional police forces and scientific detectives.

Most major cities in the Steam Age have some form of police force. In London they are the officers of the Metropolitan Police, known as "Bobbies" in honor of Sir Robert Peel, who established the force. In Paris they are the Gendarmes.

Most police forces have officers who patrol on foot and have the power to arrest. Policemen generally do not carry guns on patrol; their customary weapon is a billyclub, although some Italian police forces still issue swords. Policemen do get guns to deal with armed mobs or rioting, and detectives may carry revolvers if they choose to. To restrain prisoners, policemen use either handcuffs or thumb clamps, though many simply rely on a firm grip on the prisoner's collar.

Above the ordinary patrolmen in rank are police detectives, who conduct investigations. Most detectives in the Steam Age solve crimes by legwork, interviews and the use of informants. "Scientific" detection is still in its infancy, and many police detectives are understandably suspicious of self-proclaimed "experts" solving crimes with test tubes and microscopes. Fingerprinting is not yet in general use, and blood typing is unknown. Some police forces do use biometric measurements to identify criminals — measuring head size and certain body proportions. This sort of systematic record-keeping is made much easier and more useful with the help of Calculation Engines.

When an arrest is made in a criminal case, the matter is handed over to the courts. Criminal justice systems vary from country to country. In America and Great Britain the adversarial system of defense vs. prosecution familiar to modern readers is used. In France and other Continental nations, the judge or magistrate is in charge of discovering the truth of the case, and has fairly wide powers. The rights of the accused vary from state to state, and are strongest in America and Britain, weakest in Spain, Naples and eastern New Europa.

Punishment in the Steam Age is usually swift and severe. While criminal codes have been reformed, there are still plenty of hanging offenses: murder, rape, treason, piracy and espionage are capital crimes almost everywhere. Hanging is the primary method of execution in America and Great Britain. French authorities use the guillotine. Other countries use firing squads, and a few traditional kingdoms still use the headsman's sword. Lately some inventors have turned their minds to methods of execution, and

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have devised a variety of machines to electrocute, suffocate, decapitate, exsanguinate or defenestrate the guilty.

Less severe crimes can result in long jail terms. The French send their most incorrigible offenders and political prisoners to Devil's Island in Guiana. Prison life mirrors life on the outside: high-status prisoners get relatively comfortable quarters and can pay for good meals, firewood and candles. Poor prisoners get gruel. The purpose of prison is simply punishment; there is little notion of "reform." To occupy their time, prisoners are made to walk a treadmill, or else pick oakum (tearing apart scraps of cloth to make lint for caulking wooden ships).

### Chapter 4. DRAMATIC CHARACTERS (20PP)

#### BB Creating a Steam Age Character

The world of Castle Falkenstein is a place of adventure and excitement. Characters for GURPS Castle Falkenstein should be heroic individuals, capable of facing the Prussian army, the Unseelie Court and a dowager duchess all before breakfast. A bare minimum point value for GURPS Castle Falkenstein characters is 100 points, for a campaign in which everyone is a human with no magickal abilities. If the campaign is going to include nonhuman races like Dwarfs and Faerie, the Gamemaster should allow characters up to 300 points.

There are ways to keep players from using such an abundance of character points to create unstoppable combat monsters. First of all, upper-class characters need to spend a fair amount on Status, Wealth and Connections. Sorcerers will have to invest a lot of points in Magical Aptitude and all the various skills and abilities associated with using Magick effectively. All of those things can burn up a lot of points. The 2 times age limit on skill points for starting characters can keep skill levels from getting insanely high. And if a player insists on creating a lower-class ruffian with incredible attributes and a whole battery of advantages, just make sure he suffers all the disadvantages of being at the bottom of a highly stratified society.

#### CC Your Goals

Every GURPS Castle Falkenstein character should have goals. There are three primary areas for character goals: Professional, Romantic and Social.

Professional goals are essentially how that character defines success in his or her chosen profession. Some characters won't be satisfied short of attaining global power, while others are happy just to keep a comfortable position. Often a character's professional goal involves defeating or at least outdoing a hated rival.

Romantic goals are how the character hopes to find love. For some, it is enough to make a suitable marriage. Others hope to win the heart of a particular individual. A few poor souls have a doomed love, for someone

they can never have. Cads may be more interested in just having fun. Social goals are what the character wants to achieve relative to society. Many Steam Age individuals hope to rise above the social class in which they were born. The poor wish they were middle class, the middle class try to get rich enough to marry nobility, and the nobility vie with each other for the attention of royalty. Even kings want more power and respect. Conversely, some people are satisfied with their lot in life, and wish only to keep what they have. A few dream of getting away from it all. A character's goals should be reflected by appropriate Disadvantages and Quirks taken during character creation. Professional goals might be reflected by disads like Glory Hound, Fanaticism (or Megalomania), Stubbornness, Workaholic or perhaps even an Obsession. Romantic goals can be the origin of disadvantages like Dependent, Lecherousness or Secret. Social goals can create disadvantages like Jealousy, Code of Honor or Sense of Duty.

#### CC Your Diary

Characters in GURPS Castle Falkenstein all keep diaries. The diary is more than just a character possession, it also is a real item belonging to the player. A character diary can be as elaborate as a bound journal, as simple as a bunch of looseleaf sheets stapled together, or as high-tech as a word-processing document on the player's laptop.

The diary serves two main purposes. The first is at the start of the character's adventuring career, when the player can use the diary to note down the character's background and goals. With some help from the Gamemaster, this can also establish connections to the other player characters and important NPCs in the campaign. It is usually best to describe the character's background in the diary before getting down to the nuts and bolts of GURPS character generation. The diary lets the player paint the character in broad brushstrokes before filling in the details with skills, advantages and quirks.

Example: Phil is creating a new character, Doctor Sigismund Clave, a scientist-anarchist who uses his inventions in the service of liberty everywhere. He begins by writing in Clave's diary.

"I was born in August of 1837 in the tiny village of Karoly, in the foothills of the Moravian mountains. My father was a notary, pathetically proud of the fact that a cousin of his had married a minor nobleman in Carinthia. My mother was a peasant girl; I remember little of her as she died while I was an infant. As a child my health was delicate and I was bedridden for weeks at a time. During those long periods I forgot my ills by reading. By the age of ten I had gone through my father's modest library, and two years later I had read all the books to be had in the district.

"My father sent me to Prague to attend school, in the hope that I might become a notary or perhaps a solicitor. But my interest was captured by the



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science lectures, and I began to devote all my time to the study of chemistry, biology and electricity. After my father cut off my allowance I supported myself by tutoring other students."

"I might well have gone on to become a professor, happily writing dull monographs and lecturing to classrooms full of apathetic louts, had it not been for Marta. She lived in the garret of the house where I had my lodgings, and was a vision of loveliness with lustrous hair, dark eyes and skin like mountain snow. I was smitten the first time I saw her. She was nineteen years old, I was eighteen, and we were in love.

"There was a mystery about her. She hated to reveal anything of herself. Even after half a year I was unable to discover what she did during the day. But as the months passed I noticed a sadness and a weariness about her, which seemed to grow from day to day. The crisis came one afternoon, when I met her for a walk along the river. She collapsed in my arms, and I got her home and summoned a doctor. He told me she was dying of consumption brought on by overwork.

"As she lay there, pale and weak, she confessed that she had been working days in a factory making matches, then spending her nights doing needlework. Her family was destitute, her father an invalid. She was their sole support, and she had worked herself into the grave trying to support them.

"When Marta died, I discovered in myself a tremendous hatred of all that had brought about her illness. What good was science if people still lived in misery? I resolved to apply my knowledge to benefit humanity and punish oppressors."

The advantage of writing up the character's background this way is that it gives the player lots of ideas for ways to flesh out and deepen the character. Doctor Clave would obviously have scientific skills and perhaps some thief/spy abilities learned as an anarchist. But from the writeup we know he grew up in a small farming town and so may have some outdoor skills. From his father he may have learned a little law. Having been sickly as a child he may suffer from a Phobia about disease and infection. There are two important things to remember about a character's diary. The first is that it is the character's diary, not the player's. Things which the character doesn't know can't appear in his or her diary (although players with a bent for creative writing can find ways to imply things which the characters don't actually know).

The second thing to keep in mind is that the diary really exists in the campaign. The player should specify where his character's diary is kept, and if another character comes across it, that player is allowed to read it.

Non-player characters also have diaries, in which they tend to spell out all their hidden goals or fiendish schemes.

BB Advantages, Disadvantages and Skills

### CC Advantages

#### Claim to Hospitality

The upper classes in the world of Castle Falkenstein are a small and tightly-knit group, and still preserve the old medieval custom of open hospitality. Characters who are Gentlemen/Gentlewomen or Nobles can also take a Claim to Hospitality allowing them to stay at the houses of other aristocrats wherever they go. (Characters who don't take the advantage haven't moved about in society enough to be well-known.) For 5 points the characters are known to all the other gentry in their home nation, and for 10 points they can take advantage of the hospitality of aristocrats all over New Europa.

Magicians can also claim the hospitality of the Chapterhouses of their own or other Sorcerous Orders all over New Europa. Chapterhouses are not always located in especially convenient locations, but most large cities have at least one. This is an 8-point Claim to Hospitality.

#### Courtesy Rank

Former military officers in New Europa often go by their service rank in civilian life. This is particularly true for gentlemen of good family without a noble title. In America and other nations of the New World, almost all men of any consequence have an officer's commission in the local militia; Colonel is the preferred rank. There are far more colonels than regiments in America and Antillea.

#### Diplomatic Immunity

The Steam Age is the high point of adherence to the customs of diplomatic immunity and protocol. For local officials to interfere with a foreign diplomat would be a cause for war between the two nations. On the other hand, nations are much less profligate at handing out diplomatic accreditation — most nations maintained only a handful of embassies, in the capital cities of their closest neighbors and trading partners. Even the United States of America didn't have an embassy in Europe until the end of the period.

#### Gadgeteer

This is the required advantage for Inventor characters. Without it, characters are restricted to off-the-shelf equipment or items created using the standard Invention rules on page B186. With the Gadgeteer advantage, Inventors can create devices from any tech level. The 25-point level is sufficient for most Inventor characters, but it's certainly appropriate to have a character with the 50-point "cinematic" version, able to whip up a superweapon out of odds and ends while the villains are breaking down the door.

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### Gizmos

Inventors may also have Gizmos on hand, as described on page CI124. They are entirely in keeping with the spirit of GURPS Castle Falkenstein.

Because of the widespread love of built-in gadgets and hidden accessories in New Europa, an inventor with the Gizmos advantage may elect to declare some or all of his Gizmos to be built into his walking-stick, pocketwatch or top hat. He must pay the cost of having the container item modified in advance, and of course the Gizmo must be able to fit into the space available.

### High Technology

This advantage is only suitable for characters who are not inventors, but nevertheless have access to a supply of devices more advanced than the standard TL5+ for GURPS Castle Falkenstein. Adventurers from beyond the Faerie Veil, armed with futuristic weaponry should take this advantage at whatever level is appropriate for their home Tech Level. Gadgets like shoe-derringers or cufflink garrottes are not High Technology as they can be built by any craftsman of sufficient skill. High Technology is for things which nobody else can have.

### Literacy

In the world of Castle Falkenstein, literacy is the default condition for all characters. This doesn't mean that everyone is literate, however. Even in advanced nations like Great Britain, France or the United States there are a significant number of people who are at best semiliterate.

### Luck

This is a fairly common advantage. It may be that the laws of probability simply work differently in the world of Castle Falkenstein. At any rate, both the ordinary 15-point Luck and its 30-point Extraordinary version are appropriate for GURPS Castle Falkenstein characters. Gamemasters may even allow Ridiculous Luck, especially as a way to beef up mortal humans in a party of powerful nonhuman characters.

### Magical Aptitude

This advantage is required for all Sorcerers. It is known in New Europa as "Magickal Talent" and elsewhere by a variety of terms — the Gift, the Power, etc.

### Magic Resistance

This advantage is surprisingly common. Theoretical sorcerers believe it that in some people, Magickal Talent manifests itself as an unconscious ability to disrupt the Sorcerous Knots of spells. Naturally, this ability makes it completely impossible for the character to cast spells or use

magick. Characters with Magic Resistance are sometimes recruited as secret agents who must be able to survive magickal interrogation.

#### Patron

Agents of the Second Compact can take the organization as a Patron. The Compact is a powerful patron with advanced technology and unusual reach in time and space. Its members can potentially mobilize large military forces, up to and including Bayernese Aerocruisers or the Verne Cannon. However, the leaders of the Second Compact have a lot of matters to attend to, and require their agents to be self-reliant sorts. Furthermore, the slow speed of communications in the Steam Age means it is difficult to call for help and expect a response in less than a week. Consequently the Second Compact is a Patron worth 20 points, with a Frequency of Appearance of only 6-. Sorcerous Orders are generally less powerful than the Second Compact, but they take care of their own, and their magickal powers mean they can mobilize help anywhere it is needed. They have a Frequency of Appearance of 9- and are worth 20 points as Patrons.

#### Psionics

Psionic powers do not seem to exist in the world of Castle Falkenstein. There are three possible explanations for this. The first is that some aspect of physical law there prevents psionic abilities from working. It certainly seems to be true that the laws of nature work differently there. The second is that Psionics and Magickal Talent are essentially the same thing, and that what one universe calls a psychic adept, another calls a sorcerer. The third possibility is that the existence of magick has concealed psionics — all paranormal phenomena are assumed to be the result of magick, so nobody has ever investigated the powers of the mind. In that case a psionic from another world beyond the Faerie Veil would be the key to a whole new realm of power. There are several factions in the world of Castle Falkenstein which would be willing to go to great lengths to gain such power.

#### Racial Memory

Dragons have this ability, though in a limited form, as described in Chapter 5. It is not known to exist among any other races, or among humans.

#### CC Disadvantages

##### Addiction

Laws controlling the sale of dangerous drugs are few in the Steam Age. Indeed, many patent medicines contain massive doses of substances like opium, alcohol or cocaine, and are aggressively marketed to the public. Consequently all Addictions are legal, and are therefore worth 5 points

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less than normal. Players may add color to their characters by making them addicted to specific patent medicines rather than to their active ingredients. So a character with an Addiction to opium may not realize that it is the reason he can't live without his daily dose of Dr. Masters' Patent Kidney Tonic.

### Alcoholism

The rise of mass-produced distilled liquor in the Nineteenth Century has made alcoholism regrettably common. Though the excesses of fifty years ago (when up to a third of the people in London were drunk at any given time) are happily no more, drunkenness is a pervasive and serious social problem. Alcoholism is a -15 point addiction. Because it is still viewed as a weakness or character flaw, chronic alcoholics get a -1 reaction penalty from anyone who is a Temperance advocate, a follower of a "dry" religion, or who has taken the pledge to remain sober.

### Code of Honor

People of all stations in life take the concept of honor very seriously indeed in the world of Castle Falkenstein. Nations still go to war over insulting telegrams or violations of protocol. Gentlemen still fight duels over slights to a lady's reputation. Even a lower-class ruffian will happily bash your face in if you make a remark about his mother, his hometown or one of his friends. Among the upper classes, the Gentleman's Code of Honor (-10 points) is the standard. Everyone is expected to have it or at least pretend to, or else risk getting a Reputation as a cad and a bounder. Middle-class individuals try to ape their betters, but respect Honesty more than personal honor. The lower orders (Status -1 and below) often follow the Pirate's Code, with a special emphasis on protecting female relations.

### Delusions

One common delusion among members of the upper class is the "gentleman's delusion." This is the belief that good breeding far outweighs things like training and book-learning. It is a 10-point Disadvantage because those who believe it may occasionally undertake dangerous tasks with no knowledge of what they're doing. On the other hand it's sufficiently widespread and socially accepted that there is no reaction penalty (except among skilled individuals who know the character is nothing but a rank amateur putting on airs).

### Dragon Racial Advantages

The special Dragon powers of Dragon Magick, Firecast and Shapeshifting are described in the section on Nonhuman Races in Chapter 5.

### Duty

Duty is an important concept in New Europa, and people tend to take it very seriously. Almost anyone belonging to an organization — a military unit, a government agency, or a Sorcerous Order — would consider himself or herself to have Duty to that group.

The Sorcerous Orders usually impose a Duty worth –5 points on their members. It can be hazardous, but members are only called upon Fairly Often to serve the Order (9–). Special "troubleshooters" or members of some inner circle may have a more frequent duty.

### Dwarf Racial Advantages

The Dwarf powers of invulnerability to fire and of Metal Sense are both described in the section on Nonhuman Races in Chapter 5.

### Fat and Overweight

In many parts of New Europa and elsewhere it was not all that long ago that having enough to eat was a sign of wealth and prosperity. Even with the tremendous prosperity of the Steam Age there are still far too many people who don't get enough food. As a result, being overweight or fat doesn't have nearly the reaction penalty associated with it as it would in more health-conscious settings. Being Overweight or merely Fat at the 10–point level has no reaction penalty. Only being Fat at the 20–point level is gross enough to produce a –1 reaction. All the practical problems and limits on HT still apply.

### Faerie Racial Advantages

The Faerie powers of Etherealness, Glamour and Shapeshifting, as well as specific powers of different types of Faerie are described in Chapter 5.

### Innumerate

This is a –5 point disadvantage. Knowing how to count is important, and Innumerate characters will be at a disadvantage, but mathematical ignorance is not all that uncommon, even in big cities of New Europa.

### Primitive

The rapid growth of technology in New Europa means that much of the world's population are Primitive. Individuals from China, India, the Muslim world and Latin America can take Primitive at the 5–point level. They are familiar with TL4 preindustrial technology, but not steam-powered machinery. Characters from the interior of Africa, and other parts of Asia are at the 10–point level, as their base technology is TL3. Finally, tribes in the Amazon basin or on remote Pacific islands can have technology ranging down to TL0, depending on their particular society. Because New European missionaries and traders are busy all over the world it is not

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necessary for any character to be Primitive; an African or Amazon Indian may have been exposed to modern equipment at a trading post or mining operation and be perfectly at home in the Steam Age.

### Weirdness Magnet

One might put forth a claim that every single being in the world of Castle Falkenstein has this disadvantage; certainly enough weird stuff goes on to justify it. If a player-character wants to be a Weirdness Magnet, then the gamemaster is going to have to come up with some really weird events to plague him. Dragons dropping in for tea, infestations of pixies and getting chased by the Wild Hunt are normal hazards!

### Xenophilia

A character who is obsessively attracted to other sentient races can take Xenophilia to reflect that. For nonhumans it gets more complicated. A Dragon attracted to humans or Faerie does not have Xenophilia because that is one of the standard ways the species reproduces. Similarly, Dwarfs and Faerie women fall in love all the time; that's not Xenophilia either. A Dwarf attracted to human women is a Xenophile (and vice versa), as are humans who are obsessively drawn to Dragons. Faerie who prefer humans to the exclusion of all others are considered Xenophiles, and vice versa.

### Xenophobia

Characters who dislike one nonhuman race in particular should take Racial Intolerance. Xenophobia reflects a dislike of any and all nonhumans, be they Seelie, Unseelie, Dwarf or Dragon. This disadvantage is exceedingly rare among nonhumans, though a few of the Unseelie might have it.

### CC Skills

#### Airshipman

The development of steam dirigibles and the Bayernese Aerocruisers has created a fairly large pool of trained airship crewmen, and this is their chief professional skill. Because of the operational differences between dirigibles and Aerocruisers, characters taking Airshipman skill should specify which type of airship; they default to one another at -2.

#### Alchemy

This skill is generally obsolete in the Steam Age. A few sorcerers may study ancient alchemical texts, but only for the magickal lore they contain. Otherwise alchemy has been supplanted by modern chemistry.

#### Appreciate Beauty

This skill is fairly common among Dragons, usually with a specialization relating to their collections. Some Dwarf craftsmen may also have it,

reflecting their vast knowledge of metalworking styles. Among humans it is limited to museum curators, art critics and the like.

### Boxing

The Victorian era was the golden age of boxing. Any character with Status 1 or better would almost certainly learn Boxing rather than Brawling. In a fistfight, the use of Brawling tactics instead of formal Boxing rules is likely to reveal one as a ruffian if not a cad.

### Computer Skills

The Calculation Engines invented by Charles Babbage are the computers of the Steam Age, and perform many of the same functions. Calculation Engineers learn Computer Operation/TL5+ and Computer Programming/TL5+. Since most computers are Dedicated computers, with programming built-in at the factory, computer programming is often done with a wrench and a screwdriver rather than a keyboard. Computer Hacking is also possible, especially with some of the newfangled Calculation Engines which are connected to telegraph lines or pneumatic message tubes. There is essentially no default between computer skills learned at TL5+ and those learned at TL7, in either direction; Calculation Engines and electronic computers are completely different technologies.

### Fencing

Fencing skill is the primary skill for swordsmanship in the Steam Age. Most swordsmen learn their skill in fencing academies, and the fencer's weapons are the weapons of choice. Gamemasters who want to impose brutal realism on a campaign may require characters like Hussars or Soldiers of Fortune to learn the Broadsword skill, but it is fully in keeping with the tone of GURPS Castle Falkenstein to use a "one skill fits all" version of Fencing for all sword combat.

### Guns

Unlike nearly every skill in GURPS Castle Falkenstein, Guns are not at the "steampunk" standard Tech Level of TL5+. Curiously, despite the rapid progress of technology in other areas, guns in the world of Castle Falkenstein are no better than ordinary TL5 weapons. Consequently all Guns skills should be taken at TL5.

### Languages

French is still the "lingua franca" of New Europa. Everyone with Status 1 or better, no matter what their native tongue, speaks French. Most (but not all) Americans of high Status know French as well. Latin is still very common among scientists, physicians, scholars and just about anyone with a university education. English and German are fairly common second languages



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for people in other lands, as they are both widely used in business, science and engineering.

Dragons have their own language, which is a Very Hard skill for humans to learn. In general only humans with Dragon blood ever learn it at all, as Dragons tend to be fluent in several human languages. Dwarfs have no language of their own, using whatever the tongue of the land they live in. Faeries have a "Faerie Tongue" related to old Celtic, but even among themselves tend to use human languages.

### Naturalist

This is still the primary skill for biologists, and in fact the term "Naturalist" is still more common than "Biologist" as a job title. Physiology, Botany and Zoology are also part of a naturalist's knowledge base. Ecology, Biochemistry and Genetics are still in their infancy and do not exist as separate disciplines yet.

### Savoir-Faire

One of the most important skills in a society as stratified as that of New Europa is good manners. Savoir-Faire is the skill that distinguishes a gentleman from a commoner. Because upper-class society across New Europa shares a common code of conduct, there are no subspecializations of Savoir-Faire skill. Good manners are good manners. Period.

### Science!

The Nineteenth Century was among the last periods when one could even attempt to master all the fields of scientific knowledge. Science! skill reflects the remaining tradition of the Renaissance Man. Besides, in the world of Castle Falkenstein, all scientists are experts on all sciences, no matter what they studied at the university. This is the key skill for scientist characters.

### Sex Appeal

Despite the existence of at least four sentient species in the world of Castle Falkenstein, standards of beauty and sexiness are universal. Humans, Dwarfs, Dragons and Faerie all are susceptible to the same Sex Appeal skill, with no specialization. It ain't what you've got, it's how you use it. Of course, because of moral codes and standards of conduct, Sex Appeal is not an easy skill to learn. Demimondaines practice it, and many of the Daoine Sidhe do, too, but for ordinary people there aren't many opportunities to make a serious study of the subject.

### Weird Magic

This is the study of magickal effects that aren't in any known Lorebooks. Sorcerers who have studied Weird Magic may be able to invent new spells or

recreate forgotten magicks (always with the approval of the Gamemaster). Naturally, it requires high skill levels to successfully create new effects, and the penalties for failure are likely to be dire.

### Weird Science

Weird Science is almost hard science in the world of Castle Falkenstein. Gamemasters may want to require inventors to use this skill instead of Engineering whenever they try to create a gadget based on "superscience" technology — i.e. technology which violates the natural laws as we understand them.

### BB Character Templates

The character templates are designed to allow characters of 75 points or more. (Nonhuman characters require considerably more.) Novice players can simply use them as is, and advanced gamers can customize them with additional advantages, disadvantages and skills. Note that these are not set in stone: it is always possible to play an Adventuress character, say, who shares nothing with the template below. Each template includes suggestions for the character's reason for being involved in an adventure and the contents of his or her diary. Again, these are only suggestions.

#### CC Adventuress (50 pts)

An Adventuress in New Europa is a woman who shatters any conventions of "proper" or "ladylike" behavior, taking the world on her own terms. As comfortable on a battlefield as in a ballroom, Adventuresses are brave, resourceful, competent, and enjoy themselves enormously. As the name suggests, Adventuresses seek adventure. Some find it in exploration, others in espionage, some in fighting as mercenaries or volunteers in distant wars. A few turn to crime, either seeking gain or serving the cause of Anarchy.

ST 11 DX 12 IQ 10 HT 10

Advantages: Either Fearlessness +2 or Strong Will +1 (4), and either Combat Reflexes, Danger Sense, Daredevil or Luck (15).

Disadvantages: Either Reputation or Social Stigma -1 (-5) and either Code of Honor or Impulsiveness (-10)

Skills: Disguise-10 (2), Fencing-13 (4), Guns/TL5-13 (1), Riding-12 (2), Savoir-Faire-10 (1), Stealth-12 (2), Streetwise-10 (2), and either Intimidation-10 or Sex Appeal-10 (2).

Diary: Narratives of your adventures, names of lovers, descriptions of your greatest battles and challenges, wistful thoughts about settling down to a quiet life.

Motives: Revenge on an old enemy, love of excitement, or personal gain.

#### CC Anarchist (50 pts)

Not everyone is satisfied with the way society works in the Steam Age.

Anarchists dream of a better world, one without kings, without wars and

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without capitalists, where all people will be equal and content. The dream is so compelling that they are willing to fight and die for it. Because they are few in number, they seek to destabilize society by terror attacks, though their outrages often serve only to increase public support for the very things they are fighting against.

ST 10 DX 12 IQ 10 HT 10

Advantages: Either Fearlessness +2 or Strong Will +1 (4), either Ally Group or Patron (10), and either Combat Reflexes or Daredevil (15).

Disadvantages: Fanaticism (-15) and either Bad Temper, Bloodlust, Cannot Harm Innocents, Enemies, No Sense of Humor or Paranoia (-10).

Skills: Brawling-13 (2), Chemistry/TL5+-10 (4), Demolition/TL5+-11 (4), Disguise-10 (2), Economics-9 (2), Guns/TL5-13 (1), Knife-12 (1), Politics-10 (2), Stealth-12 (2), Streetwise-10 (2), Throwing-11 (2), Traps/TL5+-10 (2)

Diary: Names of other Anarchists and how to contact Anarchist Cells, rambling rants about Marxist theory, plans for assassinations and other outrages, half-baked plans for a Better World.

Motives: To further the cause of Anarchy, to battle oppression, to win converts to your cause.

CC Calculation Engineer (50 pts)

Calculation Engineers are at the cutting edge of Steam Age technology, constructing and operating the fantastically complex mechanical calculating engines which are the computers of the Castle Falkenstein world. They use punch cards, pneumatic valves and brass levers to program their machines, and debug them with wrenches, hammers and oil cans. Some of the less ethical Calculation Engineers use their skills to illegally manipulate the calculation systems, either for profit or to fight the increasing use of data processing by tyrannical governments.

ST 10 DX 12 IQ 12 HT 10

Advantages: Two of the following: Lightning Calculator, Reputation +2 (among other Calculation Engineers), Security Clearance +1, Single Minded (5 pts each).

Disadvantages: Workaholic (-5) and either Clueless, Honesty, Paranoia, or Solipsist (-10).

Skills: Computer Hacking/TL5+-10 (2), Computer Operation/TL5+-12 (1), Computer Programming/TL5+-12 (4), Engineer/TL5+-12 (4), Mathematics-10 (1), Mechanic/TL5+-12 (2), Telegraphy-12 (1).

Diary: Programs you want to try out, notes on the operation of Calculation Engines, thoughts on improvements to existing designs, quotes from Babbage, Lovelace and Pascal, addresses of other Calculation Engineers.

Motives: Gaining prestige and professional competence at your job, preventing the misuse of Calculation Science, the thrill of working with the most advanced Engines of the day.

CC Consulting Detective (50 pts)

Consulting Detectives are the private investigators of the Steam Age. They investigate crimes that baffle the police, and sometimes are called in by the authorities on difficult cases. Some detectives charge steep fees for their services, while others accept no pay, working only for the joy of intellectual stimulation and serving justice. While some consulting detectives are pioneers in scientific criminology, others prefer to rely on intuition and legwork. (Add Law Enforcement Powers and a Duty to turn the Consulting Detective into one of Scotland Yard's finest.)

ST 10 DX 11 IQ 12 HT 10

Advantages: Alertness +2 (10 pts) and either Combat Reflexes, Danger Sense or Intuition (15)

Disadvantages: Honesty (-10) and 15 points from among the following:

Cannot Harm Innocents (-10), Curious (-5), Pacifism (-15), Sense of Duty (-10), Stubbornness (-5), Workaholic (-5).

Skills: Brawling-11 (1), Chemistry/TL5+-12 (4), Criminology/TL5+-12 (2), Detect Lies-12 (4), Disguise-12 (2), Interrogation-12 (2), Guns/TL5-13 (1), Shadowing-12 (2), Streetwise-12 (2).

Diary: Notes on identifying tobacco ash and footprints, narratives of your most baffling cases, names of informants, fragmentary information about Criminal Masterminds and disparaging remarks about the bumblers on the Police Force.

CC Dashing Hussar (100 pts)

Hussars are more than ordinary soldiers, they're the elite in every respect. They have the best mounts, the showiest uniforms, the most prestigious regiments and the most exciting adventures. Since most come from the ranks of country gentlemen, they are often picked for important missions. From the Horse Guards Barracks in London to the hills of Afghanistan, Dashing Hussars get the job done with flair.

ST 12 DX 12 IQ 10 HT 12

Advantages: Military Rank 3 (15), Status +1 (5) and either Combat Reflexes, Daredevil or Luck (15).

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Gentleman's, -10), Duty (to the Regiment, -10)

Skills: Carousing-12 (2), Fencing-12 (2), French or German-10 (2), Gambling-9 (1), Guns/TL5-14 (2), Lance-12 (2), Leadership-10 (2), Riding-14 (8), Savoir-Faire-12 (0), Tactics-10 (4).

Diary: Names and addresses of lovely ladies, appointments for duels and romantic assignations, heavily-embroidered narratives of daring exploits.

Motives: Service to the Crown or the Nation, helping a comrade or a lady in distress, or to settle a bet.

CC Demimondaine (75 pts)

The grand courtesans of New Europa are celebrities in their own right, famed as much for their wit and clever conversation as for beauty. There is a good deal of overlap between demimondaines and actresses, dancers and singers. Most have a network of contacts among the powerful, which makes

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them natural spies and intriguers. Some Demimondaines are good-hearted and generous while others are calculating and selfish. Rivalries among famous courtesans are legendary.

ST 10 DX 12 IQ 12 HT 12

Advantages: 30 points from among the following: Beautiful Appearance (15), Charisma +2 (10), Fashion Sense (5), Patron (10), Reputation +2 among the upper classes (5), Voice (10), Wealth (10).

Disadvantages: Social Stigma -1 (-5), and either Extravagance and Impulsiveness (-10 each), or Jealousy and Miserliness (-10 each).

Skills: Cooking-12 (1), Courtesan-12 (2), Savoir-Faire-12 (1), Sex Appeal-13 (4), and either Acting-12, Dancing-12 or Singing-13 (2).

Diary: Names of lovers, appointments for new liasons, gossip and a few state secrets.

Motives: Ambition, greed for wealth, revenge on one who has wronged you, or true love.

CC Diplomat (50 pts)

In the Great Game of international politics, diplomats are the front-line troops. Diplomats negotiate treaties, arrange alliances, and frequently engage in a little discreet espionage to learn the intentions of rival nations. In an age of slow communications, when even telegraph messages can be delayed for hours or days, diplomats often have to make decisions that affect the fates of nations. The chief requirements for a diplomat are good breeding, good character and good sense.

ST 10 DX 10 IQ 12 HT 10

Advantages: Diplomatic Immunity (20), and either Charisma +1 (5), Composed (5), or Status +1 (5).

Disadvantages: Duty to the Foreign Office (Quite Often, not dangerous, -5) and either Curious, Stubbornness or Workaholic (-5).

Skills: Carousing-10 (2), Cryptography/TL5+-11 (2), Diplomacy-13 (6), Language-12 (2), Law (International)-11 (2), Savoir-Faire-12 (1).

Diary: Notes on secret negotiations and international affairs, personal information about foreign diplomats, names and addresses of informants, personal anecdotes about the great.

Motives: Duty to the Government, or possibly a secret mission.

CC Explorer (75)

The world is a big place, and there are still large blank patches on the maps. Explorers love nothing better than plunging into the unknown. Some do it to serve the cause of science, others seek fame and wealth. Explorers are often the advance agents of imperialism; some delight in planting the flag and claiming new territory while others worry about the fate of the lands they explore. Explorers tend to be competent and determined people, and those traits often make them valuable allies even in civilized territory.

ST 10 DX 12 IQ 10 HT 12

Advantages: Fit (5), Strong Will +1 (4).

Disadvantages: Either Glory Hound or Obsession (–15).

Skills: Cartography/TL5+–10 (2), Diplomacy–9 (2), First Aid/TL0–10 (1), Guns/TL5–12 (1), any Language–12 (6), Leadership–12 (6), Naturalist–10 (4), Navigation/TL5+–12 (8), Running–10 (1), Survival (any)–12 (6) and either Animal Handling–10, Hiking–13 or Seamanship/TL5+–12 (4).

Diary: Descriptions of plants, animals, minerals and natives encountered on your travels, sketches of temples and lost cities, maps of your travels, legends and rumors you want to track down.

Motives: The search for knowledge, revenge against a wrongdoer who has evaded you across the world, sheer love of adventure.

CC Gentleman/Lady (25 pts)

Gentlemen and Ladies are the backbone of the upper classes in the Castle Falkenstein universe. They may not be rich or particularly talented, but they are well–born, know how to behave, and are blessed with an unshakeable self–confidence. An ideal Gentleman does what he believes to be right regardless of the consequences. Less than ideal Gentlemen can be nothing better than idle dilettantes or bullies. The cost of this Template is low so that the player can combine it with others; a Gentleman can do anything except work for a living.

ST 10 DX 10 IQ 10 HT 10

Advantages: Status 1 (5 pts) plus 25 points from among the following:

Alcohol Tolerance (5), Attractive Appearance (5), Claim to Hospitality (10), Comfortable Wealth (10), Common Sense (10), Composed (5), Heir (5), Imperturbable (10), additional Status +1 (5), Unfazeable (15).

Disadvantage: Code of Honor (Gentleman's, –10) and either Bully, Honesty, Laziness, Overconfidence or Sense of Duty (–10).

Skills: Carousing–11 (2), Fencing–10 (2), Guns/TL5–10 (shotgun) (1), Language (English or French)–10 (2), Leadership–10 (2), Riding–10 (2), Savoir–Faire–12 (0), Sport–10 (boating, bowls, cricket, croquet, or golf) (2).

Diary: Random gossip, appointments for romantic affairs, notes on your finances and debts.

Motives: Love of adventure, sense of duty, helping an old friend or relation, a sense of justice.

CC Inventor (50 pts)

The architects of the Steam Age are the numerous inventors who have transformed the world with their fantastic creations. They come in all types, from well–financed noblemen who tinker in a castle laboratory to small–town crackpots building some new contraption out in the barn. They often tend to be eccentric, and more than a few have turned to Evil, but in a very real sense inventors are The Future. (This template has been priced fairly cheaply to allow players to combine it with others. To make a dedicated Inventor character pile on the scientific and technical skills

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and perhaps invest a lot in Wealth.)

ST 10 DX 10/12 IQ 12 HT 10

Advantages: Gadgeteer (25), Manual Dexterity +2 (6)

Disadvantages: Any combination of the following worth 20 points:

Absent-Mindedness (-15), Bad Temper (-10), Clueless (-10), Overconfidence (-10), Stubbornness (-5), Weirdness Magnet (-15) or Workaholic (-5).

Skills: Engineer/TL5+-12 (4), Mathematics-12 (4), Research-13 (4),

Science!-10 (2), Weird Science-10 (2), either Armoury/TL5+-12,

Blacksmith/TL5+-12 or Mechanic/TL5+-12 (2), and either Chemistry/TL5+-10 or

Physics/TL5+-10 (1).

Diary: Notes for fantastic inventions you want to build, sketches of gadgets, addresses of other inventors, diatribes about the fools who laughed at you.

Motives: Seeking funds for your next invention, looking for a particular substance or component, trying to learn the secrets of another inventor's creations.

CC Journalist (30 pts)

The invention of high-speed printing presses and the spread of literacy has made the Nineteenth Century into the age of mass-circulation newspapers.

Every major city has several journals, often locked in fierce competition for readers. Journalists feed the public's appetite for news, entertainment and information. They can be found just about anywhere, covering anything and trying to beat their rivals to a scoop. Ideas of journalistic objectivity and integrity are still in their infancy; papers routinely slant stories and occasionally even fabricate items. No wonder reporters are supposed to be cynical and hard-drinking. Well-known reporters can add Reputation and lots of Contacts and Favors.

ST 10 DX 10 IQ 12 HT 10

Advantages: One Contact (1), and either Intuition, Serendipity, or the combination of Alertness +1 and Common Sense (15).

Disadvantages: Curious (-5), and either Alcoholism, Glory Hound, Sense of Duty, Trickster or Weirdness Magnet (-15).

Skills: Area Knowledge-12 (1), Detect Lies-12 (4), Fast Talk-12 (2), Law-10 (1), Research-12 (2), Streetwise-12 (2), Writing-12 (2).

Diary: Names of informants, lots of gossip and tips, rough drafts of articles, debts owed to bartenders, fragments of your great unfinished novel.

Motives: Looking for a story.

CC Mastermind (100 pts)

The Steam Age is an era of rapid progress in all fields, including crime.

Masterminds are transforming evil-doing in the same way that other geniuses are changing the face of industry and society. Some Masterminds are technological innovators, applying science to crime. Others are more like the great capitalists, organizing criminal gangs and individual crooks into

smoothly-running crime trusts. A few extremely dangerous Masterminds are masters of Magick. Note that Masterminds by themselves do not have a lot of criminal skills — that's what minions are for.

ST 10 DX 10 IQ 14 HT 10

Advantages: Ally Group (30), Charisma +2 (10), Strong Will +2 (8), Wealthy (20).

Disadvantages: Fanaticism (-15), Megalomania (-10).

Skills: Disguise-14 (2), Guns/TL5-12 (1), Intimidation-14 (2),

Leadership-14 (2), Savoir-Faire-14 (1), Streetwise-14 (2), Traps/TL5+-14 (2).

Diary: Fiendish plots, plans of diabolical deathtraps and infernal devices, maps of your secret headquarters, schemes, rambling diatribes against all who oppose you, a list of enemies.

Motives: Greed, frustrated ambition, hatred, unrequited love, or a simple joy in evil for its own sake.

CC Noble (50 pts)

At the top of society are the nobility, equipped with everything that wealth and status can provide. They may not all be very bright, and some have a shocking lack of education, all nobles have an unshakeable certainty that they are born to rule. At their best the nobility are confident, brave, and incorruptible leaders. At their worst they are arrogant, inbred, decadent wastrels. Since nobles are essentially the "advanced" form of Gentlemen, players should not combine the two. The Noble template can be combined with most others, although many aristocrats consider it beneath their dignity to do anything at all except for holding government posts.

ST 10 DX 10 IQ 10 HT 10

Advantages: Status 3 (15), Wealthy (30) and 20 points from among the following: Attractive Appearance (5), Claim to Hospitality (10), Collected (5), Imperturbable (10), additional Status +1 (5), Unfazeable (15), Very Wealthy (10).

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (-10), and either Bully, Extravagance, Laziness, Obdurate or Sense of Duty (-10).

Skills: French-10 (2), Leadership-9 (1), Riding-10 (2), Savoir-Faire-12.

CC Performer (40 pts)

Performers are any characters who make a living by entertaining others.

Musicians and singers are probably the best-known and most respectable performers of the Steam Age, though actors and actresses have been gaining in both popularity and status for a century. But there is a wide variety of other types, including animal tamers, acrobats, clowns, jugglers, illusionists, trick marksmen, and others. Though most performers work hard and earn little, they do get to travel, they can mingle with different levels of society, and their lives are seldom boring. Spies, criminals and anarchists may find a useful cover in the life of a performer, and a gentleman might take it up for a while just as a lark. Demimondaines often



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start as actresses or singers.

ST 10 DX 12 IQ 10 HT 10

Advantages: Either Voice (10) or the combination Attractive appearance (5) and Charisma +1 (5), or the combination Manual Dexterity +2 (6) and Musical Ability +4 (4).

Disadvantages: Any two of Bad Temper (-10), Extravagance (-10), Jealousy (-10), Overconfidence (-10), Struggling (-10), or Solipsist (-10).

Skills: Performance-12 (8), Savoir-Faire-12 (4), Streetwise-10 (2), and any two of: Acrobatics-14 (8), Acting-13 (8), Animal Handling-12 (8), Bard-13 (8), Bullfighting-14 (8), Dancing-14 (8), Equestrian Acrobatics-14 (8), Fire Eating-14 (8), Guns/TL5-16 (8), Juggling-15 (8), Make-Up/TL5-14 (8), Musical Instrument-12 (8), Singing-13 (8), Sleight of Hand-13 (8), Stage Combat-14 (8) or Ventriloquism-12 (8).

CC Physician (50)

Medicine in the Steam Age is in the middle of tremendous changes. Where once surgeons were a poor substitute for magickal healing, the discovery of antiseptics, anaesthesia and a greater knowledge of biology has made them almost as effective. And since a doctor needs no Magickal Talent there are many more of them. Naturally, physicians are well-respected members of the professional class, and medicine is one way for individuals to rise socially by brains and hard work.

ST 10 DX 10 IQ 12 HT 10

Advantages: Composed (5), Manual Dexterity +2 (6), Status +1 (5).

Disadvantages: Pacifism (Cannot Kill, -15), Vow (Hippocratic Oath, -5).

Skills: Chemistry-12 (4), Latin-12 (2), Pharmacy/TL5+-14 (8), Physician/TL5+-14 (8), Physiology/TL5+-12 (7), Psychology-11 (2), Research-11 (1), Surgery/TL5+-12 (7).

Diary: Appointments and names of patients, notes on difficult cases, addresses of colleagues, useful information copies from medical journals, and half-finished monographs you hope someday to publish.

Motives: To help a patient or an old friend, to prevent some danger to public health, to find a cure for some rare affliction, or to escape the tedium of your daily practice.

CC Rogue (50 pts)

Though superficially a gentleman, a Rogue cares nothing for the rules of polite society, except as far as they help him prey on others. Rogues cruise like sharks through the waters of society, cheating at cards, running up debts they never expect to repay, breaking hearts and occasionally leaving town in a hurry to escape an angry husband or the Law. Some Rogues go even further by operating out con games, stealing jewels or blackmailing others. The cleverer Rogues can go on to become Masterminds, those with some lingering trace of honor may reform, but the rest are likely to wind up drinking themselves to death in some remote imperial outpost.

ST 10 DX 12 IQ 12 HT 10

Advantages: Attractive Appearance (10), and either Status +1 or Charisma +1 (5).

Disadvantages: A total of –20 points from among Bully (–10), Cowardice (–10), Extravagance (–10), Greed (–15), Laziness (–10), Lecherousness (–15), Reputation –1 (–5), or Trickster (–15).

Skills: Carousing–12 (8), Savoir–Faire–12 (1), either Fast Talk–13, Gambling–13, Forgery/TL5+–12, Lockpicking/TL5+–13, Sex Appeal–11 or Sleight of Hand–12 (4); and either Brawling–13, Fencing–12, or Guns/TL5–14 (2).

Diary: Names of ruined women, boasts, blackmail information about wealthy people, ideas for crooked schemes and lists of gullible potential victims.

Motives: The possibility of gain, the chance to catch the eye of a lovely lady, a convenient excuse to skip town in a hurry, or just maybe the chance to do something good.

CC Scientist (50 pts)

The 1870s are a great time to be a scientist. All the frontiers of knowledge are being pushed back at an incredible speed. Biologists are discovering the secrets of heredity and evolution, physicists are investigating electromagnetism, and researchers in dozens of fields are making new discoveries each day. This vast new knowledge means that scientists cannot be generalists as they could even a generation before; it is necessary to specialize in one field. Scientists are everywhere in the world of Castle Falkenstein, investigating everything from the composition of the atmosphere to the bodily proportions of slum-dwellers to the motions of nebulae. Some scientists, like Lord Kelvin, have applied their discoveries to becoming wealthy and titled; others are content on a slim stipend so long as they can continue their work.

ST 10 DX 10 IQ 14 HT 10

Advantages: Lightning Calculator (5) and either Tenure or Reputation +1 (5).

Disadvantages: A total of 20 points from among Absent–Mindedness (–15), Bad Sight (–10), Clueless (–10), Curious (–10), Reclusive (–10), Stubbornness (–5) and Workaholic (–5).

Skills: German or English–14 (2), Latin–14 (2), Research–14 (2), Science!–12 (1), and any two of the following: Archaeology–14, Astronomy/TL5+–14, Botany/TL5+–14, Chemistry/TL5+–14, Geology/TL5+–14, Mathematics–14, Naturalist–14, Paleontology–14, Physics/TL5+–14, or Zoology/TL5+–14 (4 points each).

Diary: Research data, ideas on topics for further study, refutations of the theories of rival researchers, names and addresses of colleagues, discoveries for which the world is not yet prepared.

Motives: To make new discoveries, to recover lost books or sources of information, to collect specimens, or to undo harm created by the misuse of Science.

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### CC Secret Agent (75 points)

Every nation employs spies. They have three main jobs: gathering information about rival powers, stopping enemy spies from doing the same, and keeping watch on internal dissent. Some nations have separate agencies for each task, while others make do with a small group of hard-working agents trying to do everything. Secret agents have also become the first line of defense in the battle against international Criminal Masterminds. Spies in the Steam Age are a fairly mixed bunch. Nearly all have some other career, and training is likely to be spotty at best.

ST 10 DX 12 IQ 12 HT 10

Advantages: Alternate Identity (5), Legal Enforcement Powers (10), Patron (Agency, 20).

Disadvantages: Duty (12-, -10), and either Overconfidence, Paranoia or Secret (-10).

Skills: Boxing-12 (2), Cryptography/TL5+-11 (2), Disguise-12 (2), Fast-Talk-12 (2), Guns/TL5-14 (1), any Language-12 (2), Research-12 (2), Savoir-Faire-12 (1), Shadowing-12 (2), Stealth-12 (2), Streetwise-12 (2).

Diary: Names of informants, useful gossip, military secrets, code keys, clues to potential enemy agents or masterminds.

Motives: Acting in the National Interest, pursuing a personal vendetta against an enemy agent, following a lead, defying orders from Headquarters.

### CC Servant (40 pts)

Without servants, most gentlefolk and aristocrats would be utterly helpless. Some of them don't even know how to dress themselves without a servant to assist. Servants do all the necessary chores to keep the beautiful people of the Steam Age from being up to their necks in dirty laundry and unwashed dishes. A servant's life includes a lot of hard work, but there are rewards — the chance to travel with the master, the opportunity to overhear some amazing gossip, and sometimes a bit of genuine respect along with the meager pay.

ST 10 DX 10 IQ 10 HT 10

Advantages: Patron (10), Unfazeable (15)

Disadvantages: Status -1 (-5), Struggling (-10)

Skills: Area Knowledge (Household)-12 (4), Cooking-12 (4), First Aid-12 (4), Savoir-Faire-12 (6), Scrounging-12 (4), Stealth-12 (8).

Diary: Observations on the behavior of your employer and other gentry, household accounts, interesting bits of gossip overheard, addresses of reliable tradesmen.

### CC Soldier of Fortune (70 pts)

Often soldiers leave the colors only to discover that war is their only profession. They may have honorably retired or left under a cloud, but for whatever reason, they cannot return to active service. Yet they cannot

ignore the sound of the drums, and so seek gain and glory in private wars. The best Soldiers of Fortune are honorable soldiers who thirst for action and are bored with civilian life. The worst are cynical adventurers who only want loot and don't care what cause they fight for.

ST 12 DX 12 IQ 10 HT 12

Advantages: Courtesy Rank 4 (4), Fearlessness +2 (4)

Disadvantages: Any two of Bloodlust, Bully, Impulsiveness, No Sense of Humor, Obsession (with overcoming disgrace), Overconfidence, Reputation -2, Sense of Duty (-10 each).

Skills: Fencing-12 (2), First Aid/TL5+-10 (1), French or English-12 (6), Guns/TL5-13 (1), Leadership-12 (6), Riding-12 (2), Tactics-10 (4).

Diary: Memoirs of campaigns and battles, contacts in foreign armies, notes on tactics or clever ruses.

Motives: To redeem your honor, to find adventure and excitement, to fight oppression, to get rich, to get revenge on an old enemy, to forget the woman you love.

CC Steam Engineer (40 pts)

This is the Age of Steam, and it's steam engineers who make the world go 'round. With the spread of machinery into almost every aspect of life, steam engineers are in great demand everywhere. They are involved in constructing vast new projects, keep machines humming, and design the engines which drive Progress onward. Great engineers like Brunel, Stephenson and DeLesseps are celebrities. Most Steam Engineers are content to stick with their work, but a few find themselves drawn into fantastic adventures, with the opportunity to use their knowledge of modern machinery to battle Evil.

ST 10 DX 11 IQ 11 HT 10

Advantages: Common Sense (10), Mathematical Ability (10)

Disadvantages: Any combination of the following worth -20 points: Clueless (-10), Honesty (-10), No Sense of Humor (-10), Shyness (Mild, -5), Stubbornness (-5), Truthfulness (-5), Workaholic (-5).

Skills: Driving (locomotive)-11 (2), Engineer/TL5+ (Vehicles)-14 (6), Mechanic/TL5+ (Steam engine)-12 (4), Metallurgy/TL5+-11 (4), Physics/TL5+-11 (4).

Diary: Diagrams of machinery and ideas for improvements to existing designs, addresses of firms selling parts and tools, names of other engineers involved in interesting projects.

Motives: Doing a good job, gaining a reputation by working on some impressive new project, improving the world through steam.

CC Wizard (100 pts)

The masters of Magick have had difficulty adapting to the Steam Age. Where once the Orders vied with each other for influence over kings and kingdoms,

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now they are faced with competition in the form of half-crazed inventors, grubby mechanics and engineers with no more Magickal talent than their soulless creations. While the older sorcerers have retreated into studies of theoretical Magick or petty power struggles among the Orders, some journeyman wizards have found new roles for themselves in the modern world. The exciting possibilities of Engine Magick are fascinating, and the peril from malevolent supernatural beings hasn't gone away.

ST 10 DX 11 IQ 12 HT 11

Advantages: Claim to Hospitality (8), Magery (15), Patron (Order, 20)

Disadvantages: Duty (to Order, -10) and either Bad Sight, Bad Temper, Code of Honor, Overconfidence or Reclusive (-10)

Skills: History (Esoteric)-12 (4), French or German-12 (2), Latin-12 (2), Lorebook-12 (8), Occultism-12 (2), Research-12 (2), Ritual Magic-14 (16), Savoir-Faire-12 (1).

Diary: Bits of magickal lore you've learned, passages copied from Lorebooks, ideas for new applications of magick, names and addresses of sorcerers elsewhere in the world, clues to ancient magickal knowledge or artifacts, notes on various schemes and conspiracies you're involved in.

CC Writer (40 pts)

In an age of increasing literacy, writers are the closest things to media stars. Authors like Charles Dickens or George Eliot have legions of fans across the world. Their novels and stories can have tremendous influence (Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin affected attitudes toward slavery more than any number of Abolitionist speeches.) Writers have the advantage of flexibility: they can turn up anywhere doing anything, and call it research.

ST 10 DX 10 IQ 12 HT 10

Advantages: Reputation +1 (5)

Disadvantages: Either Bad Sight, Laziness, Reclusive, Struggling, or the combination of Stubbornness and Truthfulness (-10).

Skills: History-10 (1), one Language-12 (2), Literature-12 (4), Poetry-12 (2), Psychology-12 (4), Research-12 (2), Typing-12 (4), Writing-14 (6).

Diary: Unfinished fragments, descriptive passages and snatches of overheard dialog, accounts of unpaid royalties, addresses of publishers and other writers, lists of titles, ideas for stories, lurid stories published under a pseudonym.

Motives: To gather material for a new book, to escape creditors, to promote the last book, to have an excuse for not getting any work done.

BB Non-Human Characters

Of course, not all characters in GURPS Castle Falkenstein are humans. If the Gamemaster permits it, players can have characters who are Dragons, Dwarfs or Faerie. The nonhumans all have powers which give them a very high

point cost. Gamemasters can either try to balance this by pairing them with extremely powerful human characters, or else can run an all-nonhuman campaign.

#### CC Dragon (250 pts)

Most dragons choose not to get involved in the scurrying lives of humans, preferring to maintain their collections in solitude. Younger dragons sometimes venture out into the human world, either from curiosity, desire for a mate, or in search of something to collect. Occasionally they are sent out on some mission by one of the dragon elders, and now that Lord Verithrax has joined the Second Compact such missions have increased in number.

ST 16 DX 10 IQ 10 HT 10/13

Advantages: Dragon (272 pts — see Chapter 5)

Disadvantages: A total of -40 points from among Bloodlust (-15), Code of Honor (-10), Curious (-5), Greed (-15), Laziness (-10), Lecherousness (-15) or Miserliness (-10).

Skills: History (Esoteric)-12 (4), Intimidation-11 (0), any human Language-11 (2), Magic Breath (Firecast)-12 (4), Merchant-10 (2), Naturalist-10 (2), Navigation/TL0-10 (2), Ritual Magic (draconic)-10 (0), Savoir-Faire-10 (0), Stealth-10 (2).

#### CC Dwarf (144 points)

Descended from the Faerie, but vastly different in abilities and attitudes, Dwarfs are among the few nonhuman races to welcome the arrival of the Steam Age with no reservations. Dwarfs are craftsmen without equal, and have found a comfortable niche in the workshops and factories of the new world of iron and coal.

Since young Dwarfs are often obsessed with gaining a Name and thereby rising in Dwarfish society, many of them go out into the human world to seek their fortunes. While many settle for jobs in the growing industrial corporations of New Europa and America, a few seek a more adventurous life, and their quest for new opportunities to develop and show their talents can lead them to some very strange places.

ST 11 DX 10 IQ 10 HT 11

Advantages: Dwarf (161 points — see Chapter 5), Manual Dexterity +1 (3)

Disadvantages: Obsession (winning a Name, -10), plus any three from Bad Sight, Bad Temper, Clueless, Honesty, Jealousy, Miserliness, or No Sense of Humor (-10 each).

Skills: Armoury/TL5+-14 (1), Blacksmith/TL5+-13 (1), Mechanic/TL5+-14 (1), Merchant-9 (1), Metallurgy/TL5+-8 (1), Prospecting-9 (1).

Diary: Designs for items to craft, addresses of eligible Faerie ladies, business contacts among humans.

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Motives: To win a Name, to carry out an assignment for your Dwarfhold, to win the affection of a Faerie woman, to earn money for more beer and sausage, to have the chance to work on some interesting machinery.

CC Brownie (260 pts)

These numerous and hard-working faeries are probably the best-liked among humans because of their sincere desire to be useful to others. They are the Victorian work ethic brought to life. Brownies (known by a variety of names, depending on where they live and what they do) use their magical powers to accomplish tasks which would exhaust a whole group of humans. They cannot abide being watched at their work and absolutely will not accept payment. Because they are so widespread in the human world, Brownies often attach themselves to a group of humans when it looks as if there's a good chance for some hard work. They also have a strong mischievous streak, and are as vengeful as any Faerie.

ST 5 DX 14 IQ 10 HT 10

Advantages: Brownie (288 pts — see description of racial package in Chapter 5).

Disadvantages: A total of -40 from among Alcoholism (-15), Compulsive Gambler (-5), Gluttony (-5), Gullibility (-10), Honesty (-10), Illiteracy (-10), Innumerate (-5), Kleptomania (-15), Lecherousness (-15), Miserliness (-10), Overconfidence (-10), Reclusive (-10), Selfless (-10), Shyness (-10), Stuttering (-10), and Trickster (-15).

Skills: Camouflage-12 (0), any human Language-10 (2), Mimicry (choose type)-10 (4), Naturalist-10 (2), Stealth-17 (0), and one of Agronomy/TL4-11, Cooking-12, Leatherworking-12, Masonry-16, Needlecraft-15, Weaving-16, or Woodworking-15 (4 each).

Diary: Riddles, ideas for practical jokes, snatches of songs and poetry, not much else.

Motives: To go where there's work to be done, to help humans, to have a little fun at the expense of serious folk, to stop the wicked Unseelie.

CC Daoine Sidhe (280 pts)

The Daoine Sidhe are most handsome of the Faerie, taking the form of humans with eldritch features and pointed ears. They are welcomed as aristocrats in human high society, and love to meddle in human affairs. At times their human appearance makes people forget they are ancient and powerful beings, rather than just aristocrats with looser than average morals. Like nearly all Faerie they are whimsical and self-indulgent. Their beauty and ability to enchant are used to good effect in their many love affairs with humans.

ST 13 DX 12 IQ 11 HT 11

Advantages: Daoine Sidhe (308 pts — see Chapter 5).

Disadvantages: Lecherousness (-15), Selfish (-5), Stubbornness (-5), Trickster (-15).

Skills: Dancing–12 (2), Fencing–12 (2), Intimidation–11 (2), any human Language–11 (2), Poetry–11 (2), Savoir–Faire–11 (0), Sex Appeal–12 (2), Stealth–12 (0).

Diary: Details of love affairs with humans and other Faerie, interesting things you've encountered in the human world, passages of poetry, gossip from the Seelie Court.

Motives: To seek out diversion, to help a human you've taken to, to oppose the Unseelie in their plots, to meddle for the sake of meddling.

#### CC Pixie (200 pts)

The most numerous of the Seelie, Pixies (also known as sprites, elves or fairies) best match the common image of Faerie as tiny, winged beings. They flit where they please, dressed in leaves and flower petals or the skins of mice. They take an occasionally excessive interest in human affairs, especially human love affairs. The combination of a meddling bent and their considerable Kindred Powers can lead to endless trouble for the mortals on the receiving end of Pixie "help." Despite this irritating trait they are good–hearted and brave, and often wind up in the middle of other people's adventures.

ST 4 DX 13 IQ 10 HT 10/6

Advantages: Pixie (228 pts — see Chapter 5)

Disadvantages: Curious (–5), Dead Broke (–25), Impulsiveness (–10).

Skills: Camouflage–10 (0), any human Language–10 (2), Mimicry (any type)–10 (4), Naturalist–10 (4), Navigation/TL0–8 (1), Singing–10 (1), Stealth–16 (0).

Diary: Lots of gossip from both the Seelie Court and the human world, passages from romance novels, poorly thought–out plans to help humans fall in love.

Motives: Following orders from a Faerie Lord or Lady, trying to help a human you've decided is in need of your aid, going where something interesting is happening, or simply following a whim.

#### BB Money and Prices

The world of Castle Falkenstein has a great many national currencies in wide circulation — British pounds, Prussian marks, French francs, Austrian thalers, Russian rubles, Spanish pesos and American dollars. However, since most are backed by either gold or silver, they are fairly close in value.

For simplicity's sake, all currencies except the British pound are considered to be equal to \$1. A pound is worth \$2. Smaller amounts are denoted by pence, cents, centimes or pfennigs, all equivalent to \$0.01. (A British pound is worth 200 pence — or at least close enough.)

Note that \$1 in GURPS Castle Falkenstein is worth a great deal more than in other GURPS worlds, from 10 to 100 times as much. This is reflected by the lower starting wealth and smaller salaries for characters, as well as in



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cheaper prices. Characters from other worlds should adjust their wealth accordingly; a ratio of \$50 to \$1 in GURPS Castle Falkenstein is about right.

It should be noted that the society of the Steam Age still considers working for a living to be somewhat ungentlemanly. Most of the higher-status jobs (like Diplomat or Military Officer) have surprisingly low salaries because it is expected that the upper classes have independent Wealth of their own. Taking the Gentleman profession in addition to others is a good way to model that supplementary income.

### CC Prices

For many items, a range of prices is given to reflect variations in quality.

#### Transportation

Donkey \$1 to \$3

Pony \$10 to \$30

#### Horses

Draft Horse \$25 to \$40

Mare or Gelding \$50 to \$60

Cavalry or Hunting Mount \$200

Racehorse \$500 to \$1000

Yearly Upkeep \$60 to \$100

Tack \$25 to \$50

Hire \$0.40 to \$0.50 per day

Coach \$100 to \$300

Carriage \$50 to \$100

Hansom Cab \$0.12 per person plus \$0.06 per mile

#### Railway Train Fare

First Class \$0.03 per mile

Second Class \$0.02 per mile

Open Car \$0.01 per mile

Underground Railway \$0.01 per station

#### Steamship Passage

First Class \$2 per 100 miles

Second Class \$1 per 100 miles

Steerage \$0.50 per 100 miles

#### Vane Clipper Passage

First Class \$1 per 100 miles

Second Class \$0.50 per 100 miles

Steerage \$0.25 per 100 miles

#### Sailing Ship Passage

First Class \$0.50 per 100 miles

Second Class \$0.25 per 100 miles

Steerage \$0.10 per 100 miles

Riverboat/Steam Launch Fare \$0.02 per mile

## Steam Automotive

Hire \$0.50 per mile

Purchase \$200 to \$400

## Men's Clothing

Boots \$2 to \$3

Business Suit \$1 to \$2

Cape \$2

Deerstalker Hat \$1

Felt Hat \$1

Formal Attire \$20 to \$25

Frock Coat \$3 to \$6

Mackintosh \$3

Overcoat \$5 to \$6

Shirt \$0.25 to \$1

Shirt Collars \$0.50 for 12

Silk Cravat \$0.30

Straw Boater \$0.25

Top Hat \$2

Trousers \$1

Umbrella \$1 to \$2

Undergarments \$0.50

Walking Stick \$1 to \$2

Pocket Watch \$1

## Ladies' Clothing

Afternoon/visiting dress \$3 to \$4

Bustle \$0.10

Cape \$2 to \$3

Chemise \$1

Corset \$1 to \$2

Crinoline \$1

Evening Gown \$30 to \$100

from Worth's \$200 to \$500

Fan \$1

Formal Dinner Dress \$10 to \$25

Frock \$2 to \$3

Hat \$1 to \$3

Hatpins \$1 for 10

High-button shoes \$5 to \$10

Morning/country dress \$1 to \$3

Muff \$1

Pantalettes \$0.75 to \$2

Parasol \$1

Petticoats \$1 to \$2

Reticule \$1 to \$2

## 2.2.31 Pubs

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Shawl \$0.50 to \$1

Skirt \$1 to \$2

Stockings \$0.25

Restaurants

Breakfast \$0.01 to \$0.03

Lunch \$0.03 to \$0.04

Dinner \$0.08 to \$0.10

Groceries

Ale, Beer or Porter \$0.03

Beef (pound) \$0.40

Bread \$0.05

Champagne (bottle) \$5 to \$10

Dentifrice Powder \$1

Eggs \$0.40

Fish \$0.30

Milk (pint) \$0.10

Port (average) \$1 to \$2

Port (superior) \$10

Poultry \$0.30

Shellfish \$0.40

Vegetables \$0.05

Whisky or other spirits (bottle) \$1 to \$2

Soap \$0.20

Entertainment

Theater/Opera

Standing \$3

Seat \$10

Private Box \$20

Music Hall \$0.30

Opera Glass Rental \$0.40

Fun Palaces Parks \$0.10

Public Exhibition \$0.02

Public Baths \$0.05 to \$0.50

Museums or Gardens \$0.05

Good Drink (whisky or punch) \$0.10 to \$0.15

Glass of Wine \$0.08 to \$0.10

Weaponry

Carbine \$50

Dagger \$1

Derringer \$15

Drop Pistol \$20

Life Preserver \$0.02

Musket \$15

Pepperbox Revolver \$20

Rapier \$5  
 Reciprocator \$30  
 Rifle (Chassepot) \$40  
 Rifle (Needle Gun) \$45  
 Saber \$6  
 Shotgun \$15  
 Miscellany  
 Club Dues  
 Exclusive \$100 per year  
 Good \$50 per year  
 Average \$20  
 Hardback Book \$0.50  
 Dime Novel \$0.10  
 Library Fee \$10 per year  
 Small Encyclopedia or Dictionary \$4  
 Newspaper \$0.05  
 Opera Glass \$2  
 Spyglass \$1  
 Map \$0.20  
 Box Camera \$0.20  
 Film (24 exposures) \$1  
 Steel-nibbed pens (12) \$0.04  
 Pencils (12) \$0.10  
 Vellum \$0.25  
 Writing-Paper \$0.10  
 Playing Cards \$0.05  
 Pipe \$0.24  
 Cigars (12) \$0.01 to \$0.02  
 Telegram (per 12 words) \$0.05  
 Tobacco (10 pipefuls) \$0.01 to \$0.02  
 Postage \$0.01  
 Lucifer Matches (50) \$0.02  
 Tool Kit \$15  
 Small Musical Instrument \$10 to \$30  
 Gladstone Bag \$18  
 Ladies' Bag \$10  
 Letter Box Hire (year) \$20

#### BB Jobs Table

Job (Prerequisites), Monthly Income Success Roll Critical Failure

#### Poor Jobs

Anarchist\* (none), \$5 x 1d-1 IQ jailed/death sentence

Peasant (Agronomy-12+, ST 10+), \$10 PR -1i/-2i, evicted

Servant (no attribute below 7), \$12 IQ -1i/LJ

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### Struggling Jobs

Adventuress\* (any Combat skill-12), \$3 x IQ PR-2 2d/4d and exiled

Criminal\* (4 Thief/Spy skills at 13+ or 2 at 16+), \$25 DX 3d/3d, jailed

Explorer\* (Survival and Navigation-12+), \$30 HT 1d/2d, lost in wilderness

Inventor\* (Gadeteer, Engineer-12+), \$3 x Engineer skill PR -1i/-2i, 1d and workshop wrecked by explosion

Performer (Performance-12 and Acting or any Music skill-12+), \$2 x best skill best PR -1i/-2i, LJ

Soldier (any combat or related skills totalling 40), \$5+rank, with food and equipment Best Weapon skill 2d/4d, captured

Soldier of Fortune\* (any combat or related skills totalling 40), \$30 Best Weapon skill 2d/4d, captured

Writer\* (Writing-14+), \$2 x skill PR -1i/-3i, derisive reviews

### Average Jobs

Calculation Engineer (Computer Programming and Mechanic-12+), \$100 Best PR-1 -1i/-2i, LJ

Consulting Detective\* (IQ 12+ and Criminology-12+), \$10 x IQ Best PR-2 -1i/-1i, 2d and mocked by the press

Gentleman/Lady\* (Status 1 or better), \$100 Savoir-Faire skill -1i/-1i and expelled from club

Journalist (Writing-12+), \$50 PR LJ/-1i, LJ

Military Officer (Rank 3+), \$50 Leadership or Tactics skill 3d/cashiered

Scientist (any Science skill-14+), \$80 PR ridiculed/LJ

Secret Agent (Thief/Spy skills totalling 40), \$80 LJ/captured

Steam Engineer (Engineer-14+), \$100 PR -1i/-2i, LJ and 2d from explosion

### Comfortable Jobs

Demimondaine\* (Attractive, Sex Appeal-12+), \$30 x skill PR -1i/-2i and dropped by the smart set

Diplomat (IQ 12+ and Diplomacy-12+), \$200 IQ transferred to hardship post/LJ

Physician\* (Physician-14+), \$500 PR-2 -1i/-2i

Wizard\* (Magery, Ritual Magick), \$500 PR-2 -1i/-1i, 4d

### Wealthy Jobs

Mastermind\* (IQ 14+), \$10 x IQ IQ-4 -1i/captured by minions of the law

Noble (Status 3+), \$1000 IQ -1i/forced to sell the family mansion

## 3 5. DRAGONS, DWARFS, AND FAERIE

One way in which New Europa differs from our own world's history is the presence of intelligent non-human races. Resembling creatures out of fairy-tales more than anything else, dragons, faeries and dwarfs stand as symbols of magick and mystery, albeit with some peculiarities.

The most important thing to remember about these races is that they are not at all human. Even the gruff, sturdy, mortal dwarfs are actually obsessed to the point of monomania with what seems to humans like a limited range of concerns; dragons may shift into human shape, but they are embodiments of raw power with memories reaching back to the age of the dinosaurs, while faeries, who may seem deceptively human-like, are actually an immaterial race from beyond the physical universe who can transcend the laws of physics, yet who lack the basic creativity to accomplish much with their power.

It is possible to play non-human PCs in a *GURPS Castle Falkenstein* game, but this is something that should be approached with caution; it is not as easy as players may think. High points costs aside, GMs should always feel free to prohibit such beings, if only to preserve the sense of mystery that should surround them. Human adventurers built on the same points base will probably be near-superheroes, while the non-humans (especially faeries) will be constrained by habits and concerns that can make them almost boring to play, for all their power. There is little fun in being almost impossible to kill and walking through walls when you are bound by millennia-old duties, and you become the obvious first target for every enemy attack, after all.

### 3.1 Here Be Dragons

The oldest intelligent race on New Europa, and arguably the only native sentient species apart from humanity, is also the rarest. While myth perhaps exaggerates their power, dragons combine physical might with remarkable mental abilities.

They are, in fact, a surviving species of pterosaur — survivors of the flying reptiles which ruled the skies in the age of the dinosaurs. The best current theory is that, on the magick-rich world of *Castle Falkenstein*, one type of pterosaur developed an innate sense for ambient magickal flows and patterns, which it used to improve its gliding and hunting efficiency. In time, this innate power gave an advantage to more intelligent members of the species, who used it in various ways to survive the extinction of the dinosaurs.

Modern dragons are certainly very intelligent, with a natural aptitude for sorcery. Through evolution or magickal manipulation, the species has also become very long-lived, with a peculiar and powerful racial memory. Thus, dragons have become the enigmatic "Sixth Power" of New Europa. They often seem cool, even cold, and passionless, but this is a human judgement; a dragon can afford to take his time over any business, and look at it from all sides. Threaten a dragon's favorite treasures and you will soon see passion enough.

(Many dragon characters may have Disadvantages such as Broad-Minded, Hidebound, Loner, Proud, or Uncongenial, but such attitudes are *not* universal. When dragons want to be undisturbed, they are serious about it — but sometimes, after years in a mountain cave, they plunge into human society with startling ease and self-possession.)

Although dragons are certainly formidable, they are not quite as overwhelming as some humans assume. Having evolved

## 3.5. DRAGONS, DWARFS, AND FAERIE

as flying creatures, they have relatively light frames with hollow bones, and their natural pterosaur-like shape is very clumsy on the ground, to the point of uselessness in confined spaces. However, their innate abilities more than compensate.

No one of any other species is quite sure what a dragon's natural lifespan might be. Dragons are certainly long-lived enough to merit the *GURPS* Unaging Advantage, but they do in fact eventually grow old and die. However, they do not decline much through most of their lives; rather, they grow larger and stronger as well as more experienced. They probably ultimately grow more crankish and withdraw into their collections to die — but they may rather become involved in ever grander and more important and dangerous events, or perhaps they take to magickal studies and eventually leave this plane of existence in a very physical sense. Known "mature" dragons such as the formidable Lord Verithrax may be merely the oldest who choose to consort with lesser beings.

### 3.1.0.1 Dragon Reproduction

Balancing their longevity, dragons have a low rate of reproduction; they are solitary creatures for much of the time, and like to keep large areas of mountain and wilderness for themselves. While they are always polite to each other these days, they may sometimes have fought for dominance in the past. Thus, their total population on the entire planet does not seem to exceed 200 individuals, and is not thought to have been much higher at any time in recorded history.

In fact, when the Faeries first arrived in New Europa a few thousand years ago, the dragons were aware that their population was in decline. Discovering that Faerie Lords had interbred with humans, they decided to investigate this as a solution to their own problem. Up until then, they had regarded the emerging, primitive species of humanity as an interesting occasional change of diet; learning to see them as possible breeding partners, thanks to the dragon ability to shapeshift, made the relationship more complicated. Only male dragons usually mate with humans; the species suffers from an imbalance of the sexes, and females have their pick of males if they choose to start families.

Not that dragons ever bother with human concepts such as marriage. Certainly, a dragon who identifies a potential mate (human or dragon) will shower her with gold and presents and offer her an extravagant home (or lair), but even these wildly romantic gestures could be interpreted almost as a business proposition. The mate is expected to look after any offspring until they are about ten years old, after which the father takes them away to teach them their heritage. It is not unusual for a dragon to be maintaining several households scattered across a continent, but even so, given the draconic tendency to take the long view, the species as a whole is not increasing much in numbers.

Dragon offspring almost always possess dragon form, with the full range of abilities, although they are born human from human mothers (this is magickal breeding, not scientific genetics, and dragon nature is strong). However, some part-human dragons may have minor, embarrassing limitations, and a few such offspring may be largely human, with some odd, draconic features. (In game terms, this *might*, with GM permission, be used to justify reduced-points-cost dragons, or human characters with some dragon powers.) In both Europe and Asia, there are noble families who claim "dragon ancestry"; a few are telling the truth.

### 3.1.0.2 Dragon Collecting

Another crucial feature of the dragon mind-set is their obsession with collecting. This is the origin of all the legends of "dragon hoards," though the image of a giant lizard sitting on a heap of gold is a crude caricature. Dragons are far more

refined than that; they are, to a reptile, connoisseurs, and usually highly specialist collectors.

Their explanation for this is that it is a consequence of their capacity for memory; what actually interests them is the reconstruction of things or circumstances that they can recall from their racial history. They can *remember* the appearance of a Roman goldsmith's work or the sound of a Beethoven concerto, but actually to possess the jewelry, or the instruments on which the music was played, makes the feeling complete. That said, like most habitual collectors, they develop their personal quirks; much that they collect is only tangentially related to their own memories, they all have their own specialties, and they hate to know that what they have is a partial set, or incompletely documented.

They also vary in their methods for acquiring collections. Some are scrupulously honest, and most recognize that theft or trickery will bring them more trouble in the long term than they save in the present; most possess more wealth than even their "hobby" demands. (They are rarely truly greedy, but often put a great deal of effort into business affairs in order to finance their collecting.) However, they do tend to be arrogant and egocentric, and can be very determined; while it is hardly usual for them to conduct or commission robberies, it is not unknown.

### 3.1.1 Dragons and Magick

(Note; see Chapter 6 for details of the form taken by magick in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*; the following should be read in conjunction with that chapter.)

Dragons have a near–instinctive ability to manipulate magickal energy that forms part of their ancient heritage; a combination of innate ability and racial memory makes them formidable sorcerers. All members of the species possess a version of Ritual Magic as a racial skill; in their case, the "ritual" is little more than a concentrated gazing into space and a little murmured invocation in long–forgotten languages.

However, they are also limited in certain ways; shaping and twisting Thaumatic Energy with instinctive ease, they seem incapable of building the greatest, most intricate etheric knots. For a vastly patient race, they seem oddly unwilling to engage in the prolonged rituals that human sorcerers use to build their greatest spells. It seems that their close, instinctive sense for magickal forces actually makes extended workings stressful and unpleasant for them, to the point that they can only spend limited periods of time gathering and manipulating these energies. (It is not clear whether they are actually *incapable* of learning ritual styles from human sorcerers, but the fact is that they never do. This may reflect their own view of magick, or it may even be that they are simply too proud.) On the other hand, the sheer range of options available to them more than compensates. For game purposes, this is reflected as a special, setting–specific Advantage:

#### 3.1.1.1 New Advantage: Dragon Magick [50 points]

The character can use any effect available to any human sorcerer in the campaign without reference to any Lorebook. The only *possible* exceptions would be highly specific effects invented from scratch in the recent past, or kept scrupulously secret from all dragons through history; however, with an innate and instinctive grasp of magick, the character may well be able to recreate and cast these, once he is aware of their existence and form. (For game purposes, say that, if the character can observe a new effect in use, he can analyze it with an IQ roll; given three successful rolls, or one critical success, the character can emulate the effect.) The character's effective skill with every Lorebook is equal to their Ritual Magic skill.



## 3.5. DRAGONS, DWARFS, AND FAERIE

The drawback with this advantage is that the character can only make up to five consecutive attempts to gather Thaumic Energy in the course of casting a single spell. If these together do not provide enough energy, the character must give up and return the energy gathered so far to the ether. In addition, although the character can Unravel himself to cast spells in emergencies, he cannot Unravel others (not that any respectable human sorcerer would consider that a disadvantage).

Dragons cannot easily teach their knowledge of magickal effects to human sorcerers; how does one teach an instinct? Thus, having a dragon friend provides no easy access to their full range of lore. However, it is said that Chinese dragons preserve records of certain of their most ancient magickal techniques in written form, for the interest and for the benefit of some of their half-human children, so nothing is *impossible*.

### 3.1.1.2 The Dragon Firecast

Despite numerous legends, dragons cannot truly breath fire. However, they have an ancient, racial favorite magickal technique that explains where the stories come from; the Firecast.

This can only be cast while in dragon form, and can indeed have the appearance of flaming breath from the dragon's mouth. Rather than gather Thaumic Energy for this, dragons expend their own life-force; hence, in *GURPS* terms, it is bought as a Natural Attack. Dragons do not use the Firecast to excess, but they are fully aware how intimidating other races find it.

### 3.1.1.3 Dragon Shapeshifting

Yet another aspect of innate dragon magick is their ability to change shape. Having mastered this power long ago, they presumably could in theory use it to adopt almost any form. However, in recent millennia, they have refined a specific non-ritual technique, to simplify their interaction with humanity.

Thus, every dragon can assume a specific humanoid shape. However, the form they take is not *quite* human, and marks them out clearly for what they are. A shape-shifted dragon is always at least six and a half feet tall, slender, and double-jointed. Most distinctively of all, it retains the striking eyes of its natural shape, with their cat-like pupils. (Dragons seem quite incapable of concealing this detail by any magick whatsoever.) Their shape-shifting is also limited in other respects; see below for details.

## 3.1.2 Dragon Racial Package

This represents a minimum definition of a member of this species, and is suitable for a young, impetuous dragon, perhaps making his way in human society for amusement and interest. Older, more experienced dragons grow *much* larger and far more formidable; they also acquire higher levels of Magery and Ritual Magic skill, and many are very powerful sorcerers. While many do have high IQ in *GURPS* terms, sheer patience, along with personal and racial memory, tend to account for much of their reputation for intelligence.

Dragons have two shapes, "human" and draconic; shifting from one to the other takes one minute, and a dragon can only change shape three times in any 24-hour period. (The process is psychically tiring.) The dragon has the same skills and many of the same abilities in both forms, but its natural shape has several advantages and drawbacks. Hence, this ability is bought using a version of the *Transformation Advantage* (see p. CI68).

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Rather than detailing the human form separately, treat it as having the Advantages and Disadvantages marked (\*) below, along with all Skills possessed in dragon form. (In fact, some skills, especially those requiring fine manipulation, can *only* be used effectively in human form.) In addition, when in human form *only*, dragons have the Double-Jointed Advantage, and also an Unnatural Feature Disadvantage in the form of their cat-like eyes, which can be disturbing to humans who have not dealt with a dragon before, and which, along with its height, mark a dragon out for what it is.

A dragon has the same DX, HT, IQ, and Hit Points in both forms; its Hit Points may seem low in dragon form, but this reflects that light, hollow-boned frame, while dragons give themselves robust bodies when taking human guise. ST in human form is 2/3 that in dragon form, rounding all fractions down, so, for example, a dragon with ST 19 shifts into a "human" with ST 12. (Scale current Fatigue levels in proportion.) Advantages and Disadvantages aside from those included in the package usually apply to both forms, although some may have different effects, at the GM's option; for example, a crippled limb may take the form of the Lamé Disadvantage for the human form, and of complete removal of the ability to fly for the dragon form.

*Important Note:* According to the rules for characters with Transformation, earned character points can be applied to the one form *or* the other, but not both, but a dragon can almost always use acquired skills and advantages in both forms; therefore, dragons must spend experience twice over to gain the benefit. In other words, dragon characters progress at half the rate of other characters with the same experience points! (Of course, Eidetic Memory compensates for this for mental skills.) This nicely reflects the complications of life for a character with two different, useful forms, and the difficulty of applying lessons learned to both of them; it also serves to help keep dragon PCs under control, if such are allowed.

*Attributes:* +6 ST [70], +3 Hit Points [15].

*Racial Advantages:* Breathe Fire ("Firecast"; 2d, 6 hex range, roll vs. DX; Nuisance Effect, user suffers 4 hit points of fast-healing damage per use, -50%) [13]; Claws [15]; Cool\* [1]; Damage Resistance +1 [3]; Dragon Magick\* [50]; Eidetic Memory\* [30]; Magery 1\* [15]; Magic Resistance +3\* [6]; Racial Memory\* [40]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Status +2\* [10]; Transformation (Limited Use, 3 times/day, -20%; Preparation Required, one minute, -20%) [9]; Unaging\* [15]; Winged Flight [30].

*Racial Disadvantages:* Compulsive Behavior (Collecting)\* [-5]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Reduced Manual Dexterity -6 [-18]; Reduced Move (Running) -3 [-15]; Short Arms [-10].

*Racial Quirks:* Always take the long-term view\* [-1].

*Racial Skills:* Ritual Magic (draconic)-(IQ) [4].

\*Also apply to human form.

It costs 272 points to play a dragon. Notes:

1. For a young, small dragon, Inconvenient Size mostly reflects leathery wings with a 10' span that cannot be fully folded; the dragon's body may be only 6' or so long. Mature dragons grow *seriously* large, their 25' bodies supported by 50' wingspans. Such huge dragons have phenomenal ST and numerous Extra Hit Points. (The largest may have as much

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as ST 40 and 33 Hit Points.) Reduced Manual Dexterity and Short Arms represent the fact that a dragon in its natural form has only claws on its wings and feet, along with its long jaw, with which to manipulate objects. In "human" form, dragons are very tall and quite slim; exact height and build is the dragon's decision when learning to use its power, but for a rule of thumb, find height normally for the human form's ST, add 10" up to a maximum of 7'6" or so, then calculate weight from height and subtract 20 lbs.

2. The Firecast is bought using the "Cheap" Natural Attack Improvement Scheme (see p. CI72); using the "Expensive" scheme would obviously make the package cost higher. Each use effectively inflicts injury to the dragon; this "damage" represents use of the dragon's life-energy, which is reasonably easily restored, at the rate of 4 hit points per day. Some dragons may buy extra dice of damage with associated extra range (+3 hexes per +1d), at a net +3 points per increment; more powerful breath is usually associated with a more powerful general physique, so characters should usually be limited to buying only +1d for every +3 ST that they have bought over the package base. Dragons may also buy increases to their DX-based Firecast use roll for 4 points per +1; this is effectively a skill, and so does not take the power Limitation.

3. Dragons have natural armor when in dragon form; this is markedly heavier on larger dragons. (Some very young or feeble dragons may drop Damage Resistance altogether). Dragon characters may buy more Damage Resistance at +1 per 3 points, but should not have a total DR equal to more than their Hit Points divided by 4. Dragons with any Damage Resistance may buy +1 Passive Defense for 25 points; those with DR 3+ may buy +2 Passive Defense for 50 points.

4. Stronger dragons are able to fly faster; some can match the fastest falcons. To reflect this, dragon characters may purchase one level of Enhanced Move (Flight) at 10 points (see p. CI54) for every full +5 ST they purchase over and above the racial package level. Also, some dragons enjoy aerobatics, and hence buy up their Flight skill (p. CI131), but most leave it at the default level (DX).

5. Given the age of the race, dragon Racial Memory is potentially a very powerful Advantage, and open to abuse. GMs should feel free to rule that many of a dragon character's ancestors spent most of their lives curled up with an interesting collection of Chinese porcelain or mammoth skeletons, accumulating very little useful information for a descendent to exploit; certainly, dragons have traditionally paid only cursory attention to the sort of human concerns that are usually important on adventures. See the sidebar, p. 00, for more on this subject.

6. In New Europa, a dragon is always treated as the social equivalent of *at least* a minor aristocrat; to do less would seem dangerously tactless, and after all, dragons are often very rich. Some use titles which appear to reflect their standing in their own society, and human hosts rarely choose to dispute the point. Hence, dragon Status (and Wealth) can be set quite high.

### 3.2 Dwarfs

The most human-like non-human race of New Europa, dwarfs are actually much-changed creatures of faerie. Several thousand years ago, a faction of the faeries grew both tired of the battles of Seelie and Unseelie, and obsessively fascinated by metals, especially the "Star Iron" that is deadly to their kind. They thus decided to abandon their old, unstable natures and adopt mortal form. Their leader, Bes, allied with the dragons to work this great magick.

The race still carries the mark of that old decision, in that they remain obsessed by metals of all kinds. The dwarf power

known as "Love of Metal" makes them exceptional craftsmen; it also enables them to sense metals of any kinds over great distances. In addition, the new dwarfs found that they had been made highly resistant to magick and completely immune to fire and heat of all kinds, which the dragons did not expect; a blast of dragon-breath or a volcanic eruption may leave a dwarf with every stitch of clothing burned away, but otherwise unharmed (albeit highly irritated).

Dwarfs are a robust species, living about 200 years and remaining healthy and active for all that time. They are short and sturdy, with large hands; their one unfortunate physical peculiarity is their feet, which resemble those of ducks or chickens. Dwarfs are painfully aware of how ludicrous other races find this, and *always* wear heavy boots or similar footgear in public. In fact, dwarfs having become a race of engineers and craftsmen in the Victorian age, they usually dress in overalls and work gear, or three-piece suits with pocket-watches; they also like tall opera hats. They find chainmail, axes, and horned helmets as ludicrous and archaic as any human would. They do mostly have heavy beards, although some have taken to waxed moustaches and goatees. Working dwarfs do sometimes carry hammers (or heavy wrenches), which are perfectly adequate in a fight.

Having adopted stable forms, dwarfs also acquired relatively stable personalities, albeit that humans find them irascible and emotional. A few have vile tempers; most are egocentric and obsessive. They do have concerns outside of metal-working, however, including pork cutlets, sausages, and beer. (There are lot of dwarfs around Germany, and they revere good human brewers.) Many also have happy family lives.

### 3.2.0.1 There Are No Female Dwarfs

As their beards may suggest, all dwarfs are male. The truth about dwarf reproduction is no secret in New Europa, although it is a source of some confusion to humans. Dwarfs marry females of the faerie races, and the offspring are dwarfs if male, take after their mothers if female.

Dwarfs have little trouble finding brides (once they remember to leave any iron items behind when courting). Normally, if faeries mate and produce offspring, each parent most donate a significant amount of its own vital energy to create the new faerie, but dwarf-children demand far less of the mother's life-force. In addition, dwarfs are stable, reliable husbands, who live much longer than humans. However, given that dwarfs usually marry some of the most beautiful of faerie females — such as White Ladies and Naiads — humans often find the sight of a big, noisy dwarf family gathering in the woods at the foot of some mountain deeply bemusing.

### 3.2.1 Dwarf Racial Package

*Racial Advantages:* Extended Lifespan [5]; Invulnerability (Fire/Heat) [100]; Longevity [5]; Magic Resistance +15 [30]; Metal Sense\* [10]; Skill Bonus +4 to any Craft Skill or Engineering (only when making or working on a metal object, -25%) [18].

*Racial Disadvantages:* Odious Personal Habit (regards metals, metalwork, and gadgetry as more important than social relationships or good manners) [-5]; Reduced Move (Running) -1 [-5].

*Racial Quirks:* Gruff; Embarrassed by his own feet, and keeps them hidden; Loves beer and pork. [-3]

\*See below for this race-specific Advantage.

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It costs 161 points to play a dwarf. Remember also that a dwarf with Status 0 or less is almost certainly Obsessed with gaining a Name (see the sidebar). To find dwarf height and weight, calculate these normally for a human of the same ST, then subtract 10" from height and add 20 lbs. to weight. The typical dwarf personality can take many forms in *GURPS* terms; Advantages such as Composed, and Disadvantages such as Bad Temper, Callous, Curious, Nosy, or Staid (or even Clueless or Low Empathy) are all common (often replacing the Racial Quirk: Gruff), but none are mandatory, and many dwarfs are more sociable than this may suggest.

### 3.2.1.1 New Advantage: Metal Sense [10 points]

This is a magical sense inherent in dwarfish nature. In game terms, the character can detect and identify even quite small quantities of metal at up to one mile distance. Dwarfs say that they can *smell* metals, and although this might be taken as a figure of speech, they mean it literally; the ability will not work in a vacuum, or locate metal deposits deep under solid rock (although it *can* lead a dwarf to a small vein of metal ore within the walls of an intricate cave–complex). A dwarf with No Sense of Smell/Taste will also lack this ability (thus reducing the cost of the character's Racial Package by 10 points), and it might be "overloaded" as human smell can be by multiple strong sources. The GM may require IQ–based rolls for complex tasks such as identifying one metal among several "scents."

## 3.3 Faeries

Shape–shifting, whimsical, dangerous creatures of human myth, the faeries of New Europa are in fact alien energy beings from a formless void between universes. This does not indicate that they have deliberately misled humanity (although they *have*, often enough); rather, the faeries have shaped themselves according to their understanding of what they have found in the worlds of matter, while human understanding of faeries has been shaped by prior assumptions and confusion.

The history of faerie activities in the several universes they have visited is not generally known in New Europa, with good reason from the faerie point of view; they have been terribly destructive and careless in their past, and few of them are good at learning from experience, even when they are defeated. However, they have formed incredibly powerful *habits*, some of which dictate the shape each takes and the powers they display. Because faeries pick up habits from each other, there are a number of defined "species." Nonetheless, faerie powers and shapes are very diverse, and some faeries look and behave nothing like each other. They do, however, all have some features in common.

To begin with, there are their powers of *Etherealness*, *Glamour*, and *Shapeshifting*. The first reflects the fact that faeries are creatures of pure energy, who adopt solid form as a temporary choice; they can adopt a less solid form at will, float or fly through the air, and avoid or minimize physical damage. The last can be reflected in *GURPS* terms with extra Hit Points, Damage Resistance, and Passive Defense; the other aspects of Etherealness are defined as various other Advantages. At the very least, a faerie can take an amorphous, quasi–liquid form (treated as Body of Water, p. CI40, with Limitations) and float through the air without much control over direction or speed (Flight, p. CI56, with a –70% Limitation); the most powerful can become completely immaterial (Insubstantiality, p. CI59) and fly at great speeds (Flight with Enhanced Move, p. CI54). A few can become almost invisible when they become intangible, but this is very rare. However, an ethereal faerie cannot pass through *living* material, so not only are they slowed down when flying through forests or crowds, but a building covered in lush green ivy is actually partly protected from faerie intrusion. Furthermore, only powerful faeries can pass through metals, only the most powerful can pass through steel, and all but the mightiest are stopped by iron. ("Star Iron" — see below — is a perfect barrier.) For this reason, humans who want

reasonably secure buildings mix iron fragments in with their mortar.

"Glamour" is the faerie ability to create what are strictly illusions, influencing others' senses. The least capable faeries can exert a little control over light, shade, and sound levels — just enough to startle or confuse mortals, if the faerie is clever. More powerful faeries can produce images which are real to all five senses, and which last for several minutes, even if the faerie leaves the scene. Such Glammers have the full feeling of solidity, to the extent that an "illusory" blade can cut; they are actually constructs of faerie energy. The very greatest Glammers can change the seeming of a whole kingdom for centuries. However, the touch of iron or steel causes any faerie glamour to fade away (and Star Iron causes them to pop like soap bubbles); thus, many shopkeepers have an iron plate on the counter (and a faerie who depends on an illusory sword will be in trouble if it is parried with a steel blade). In *GURPS* character-creation terms, these powers are mostly represented by either the Image power (p. CI72) or Knacks (p. CI38) with various Illusion and Creation spells.

(In fact, GMs who own *GURPS Magic* and ideally *GURPS Grimoire* may optionally replace the Image and Glamour powers listed below with Racial Spells from the Illusion and Creation college; while Glamour is not magic in the technical sense in which the word is used in New Europa, the effects are the same. Note, however, in that case, that the spell costs may take a Limitation for being dissipated by iron or steel, and that many faeries should have *very* high levels in several such spells.)

Thirdly, Shapeshifting is the faerie's ability to change the solid form it has adopted, equivalent to the Morph power (p. CI61). In principle, a faerie can take the shape of any being or thing, but the essential faerie lack of imagination actually limits this power severely. In addition to the normal restrictions on Morph, a faerie can only imitate someone or something it has seen with its own eyes; photographs, or even mirror reflections, are not good enough (a -10% Limitation). GMs should note that the chance of a faerie who saw someone or something years or centuries ago retaining the memory is limited, however useful the shape. Again, faeries vary in their ability with this power, from those who can merely become an amorphous mass with hints of the thing imitated (usually treated as a side-effect of a low-power version of Etherealness), through those who can shift shape (but not size) with various Limitations (such as Costs Fatigue, p. CI110, or Unreliable, p. CI112), to the subtlest expert impersonators. Less smart faeries are noted for making some silly mistakes in their impersonations; some, who like to use shape-changing in combat, also have Strikers (p. CI66) with the Limitation "Only while Morphed to appropriate form" (-50%).

In addition to all this, each category of faerie has its own special abilities, known as "Kindred Powers." These vary enormously, and are described along with the faeries who possess them. When points costs have to be assigned to a Kindred Power, it is often best to treat it as a Knack version of one or two spells from *GURPS Magic* or *GURPS Grimoire*.

### 3.3.1 Faerie Weaknesses

Although they have sometimes pretended otherwise, the faerie are not gods. They have real limitations, which can sometimes be exploited.

To begin with, they are fundamentally *uncreative*, especially with regard to the use of their powers. The lesser species especially are locked into fixed patterns of behavior and self-imposed rules. However, the *most* powerful have thousands of years of experience of humanity, trickery, and power, so they rarely need to invent anything new, and their alien objectives and long-term plans make them dangerously unpredictable. Nonetheless, most faeries have Disadvantages

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such as Dull or Hidebound, and are either Broad-Minded (not being able to imagine what is important about differences between species) or Chauvinistic or worse (being unimaginatively proud of their own particular shape).

Secondly and ironically, given that they are in a sense creatures of pure magick, the vast majority of faeries have less sorcerous ability than the average human. Having bound themselves to specific forms, it seems, they simply cannot create etheric knots, and they do not even seem to notice some magickal phenomena. Their own powers are considerable, but sharply defined, unlike the versatile and open-ended powers of a sorcerer. The only living exception to this appears to be Auberon, king of the Seelie Court; even the Adversary, lord of the Unseelie, does not employ spells. If Auberon has any close kin who share his talent, he is keeping the fact to himself. His own spells are powerful but often eccentric, not fitting any particular human tradition. (If he appears in a game, the GM should remember that his spells are just one of the things about him that give him the dangerous unpredictability of a force of nature.) Faeries are quite resistant to magick, but not immune to it, and human sorcery is one thing that keeps the danger presented by their kind under control.

### 3.3.1.1 Repulsions

Faeries also have essentially physical limitations, some of which result from their underlying nature as energy beings held together by willpower, and some of which are ancient habits hardened into binding laws. The latter vary from species to species, and usually take the form of *Repulsions* — objects or phenomena that cause a faerie to back away or even flee in panic.

In fact, any Repulsion that affects a specific type of faerie can *sometimes* affect *any* faerie. This is simply because, among faeries, powerful habits can spread. The fact has saved many human lives, and cost many more through misunderstanding. Known Repulsions include holy symbols (which must represent a religion in which the wielder has some genuine belief, or be sited in a church or temple), prayer (which again must usually be backed by belief, although faeries have occasionally been driven off by a convincing act of insincere faith), salt crystals (at least a handful, and salt water does *not* work), the sound of church bells (actually any large bells), significant quantities of natural running water (a stream or river, but not indoor plumbing), and, bizarrely, clothes worn inside-out.

Furthermore, all faeries have an ancient aversion to various plants; oak, holly, ash, and thorn wood, along with sage and sweet-grass plants, all affect them somewhat. (For this reason, these plants are often used in the magickal works of various groups.) In *GURPS* terms, other species' Repulsions and these woods together are treated as representing a mild Phobia (see p. B35) for faeries. However, the "inappropriate" Repulsions are not terribly effective; Will rolls to resist the Phobia are at +3, and a faerie will only usually be driven off by such after several failed Will rolls (or one critical failure).

A Faerie's own, species-specific Repulsions effect it much more strongly, and are usually treated for *GURPS* purposes as a Dread (see p. CI97). However, most faeries can overcome such Dreads with a Will Roll at -5, *if* they have a pressing reason to remain in the area. (Note; "being paid to" or "saving a stranger's life" are not pressing reasons from a faerie's point of view; "being ordered by Auberon/the Adversary" or "saving a true love's life" are more convincing.) This is treated as a -10%

Limitation on the Disadvantage. Note that faeries act as though all these Repulsions are causing them physical distress; they flinch, snarl, avert their eyes, or shiver violently.

Iron affects some faeries rather more strongly. In fact, given that iron and steel can cause them severe injury and induce physical discomfort (see below), many species display a healthy rational dislike of these metals. However, some faeries have extended this into an active Dread of even quite small quantities of reasonably pure iron, but not steel. Thus the strength (and points value) of this problem varies by species. As for "Star Iron," which can destroy faeries completely, this represents such a severe danger to them that their response to it is simply logical.

### 3.3.1.2 Faerie Promises

The other well-known but sometimes misunderstood faerie weakness is the fact that they cannot break their word. This is literally deadly serious for them; once they have given a solemn promise or vow, breaking it can destroy them forever.

This is because faeries are, by nature, bundles of raw energy held together by will and personality; to break a solemn promise disrupts the pattern they have created for themselves. Note that the promise must be genuinely tied to their self-image; an obvious joke or an opinion given as such is not enough, but a firm promise given under duress or while drunk is binding. Faeries can sometimes survive a lapse, but no immortal being risks True Death lightly (the mere attempt is worth at least a Fright Check), and surviving once does not eliminate the promise.

In *GURPS* terms, this is treated as two related Disadvantages. Firstly, it is the equivalent of a Great Vow (p. B37) to "always hold to the letter of promises," worth -15 points, because faerie characters must always behave with this in mind. Secondly, it is treated as providing three levels of Vulnerability (p. CI106) to a rare condition, "having broken a sworn promise," for another -15 points. Thus, a faerie which breaks its word takes 3d damage per turn until it dies; this may mean that a lucky faerie may have a turn or two to reverse the mistake, if possible.

All this has practical consequences for faerie behavior. For one thing, faeries — even benevolent or stupid individuals — tend to be very good at phrasing promises and contracts, employing numerous conditions and open clauses. Promising to do something "to the best of my abilities" or "unless prevented" leaves the faerie fairly safe, after all. Conversely, humans *must* remember that asking a faerie to give its word or promise on *anything* is a serious matter. What from a human is little more than a courtesy, is a commitment unto death from a faerie. Even a friendly, good-natured faerie will take such a request badly, and one who was not a friend to begin with will be extremely angry. Sensible folk do not ask other beings to commit their lives over trivia. A faerie character with an additional Vow of any kind has committed its *life* to something, and some have weird Compulsive Behaviors dating back to some ancient, now-meaningless promise. Lastly, all this gives faeries a doubtful view of humanity; to a faerie, a human being is someone who can give what should be a life-and-death commitment without meaning, and whose most solemn word lacks any real weight.

### 3.3.1.3 Faerie Services and "Marriage Prohibitions"

A lesser "Repulsion" of sorts is a matter of behavior rather than an object or substance. Faerie species who have formed the habit of helping a human at home or work will be driven off by the offer of a gift or payment from the human they are aiding. Likewise, faeries (especially females) who choose to marry human beings often set peculiar conditions — things the human must always or never do — and if the human breaks the rule, they depart forever.

The former is again related to the strength of the faerie's self-image. "Helper" faeries always *take* what they think is a fair price for their work; a regular morsel of food and drink, for example. Given this, they regard gifts or payments, not



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as generosity, but as attempts to coerce them into working harder by shifting the balance of the relationship. They resent this, and thus always make a point of leaving. As for marriage prohibitions, these are again matters of habit and old law, and perhaps tests of the human's ability to understand and hold to serious promises; having bound to them in its marriage vows, the faerie will feel that it has no choice but to leave when they are ignored.

These self-imposed rules can mostly be covered by a Code of Honor; the "Brownie Code of Honor" (be very helpful to polite humans, do your adopted work to the limits of your ability, but leave if offered payments or gifts) is worth -5 points.

### 3.3.1.4 Steel, Iron, and Star Iron

The last and greatest faerie weakness is a vulnerability to iron, including iron in the form of steel. This is related to faeries' physical nature as energy beings; it seems that iron disrupts their structure or pattern. In *GURPS* terms, this means that faeries take +1d damage from iron and steel weapons as a Vulnerability (see p. CI106; one level, Common) worth -15 points. In addition, as described above, faeries have varying levels of physical or psychological aversion to the mere presence of iron, taking the form of a Phobia, Dread or Fatigue-reducing Vulnerability with strength varying by species. Some can, say, remain aboard an iron ship for an extended period, but the effect for most is like a permanent splitting headache; there are a lot fewer faerie sailors in New European navies than there used to be.

The most extreme form of this weakness is the faerie response to "Star Iron" — meteoric iron. Theories vary as to why this material, which cannot easily be distinguished from ordinary iron by human science, is so deadly to faeries, but the best seems to be that ambient magickal energies are much lower beyond the Earth's atmosphere, so that Star Iron is "magickally denatured," making it especially effective at draining away and dissipating a faerie's constituent energy. Certainly, Auberon has hinted that, in parallel universes where magick does not work, *all* iron is effectively Star Iron, or at least almost as dangerous to his kind. (Thus, both journeys to other worlds of the solar system, and ventures beyond the Faerie Veil, could bring back lethal faerie-killing weapons.)

In game terms, a weapon made of Star Iron does an additional 4d damage when it strikes a faerie. In addition, any visible quantity of the metal gives a faerie within a yard or two painful headaches, half a pound does 3d damage *per turn* to any faerie within a similar radius, and a five pound Star Iron meteor would give every faerie within 100 yards a headache, more or less incapacitate any within 50 yards, and inflict damage on any within 25. But what *truly* terrifies faeries is that one killed by this power suffers True Death (see below). When they sense Star Iron, most faeries flee the scene immediately.

Fortunately for faeries, effective Star Iron is very rare; one estimate is that there is only a ton or so in the entire world, and most of that is held by human governments, or at least exceptionally well-guarded museums. (It loses power if heavily alloyed with other matter, and possibly if exposed to ambient magick for extended periods.) In fact, it is so rare that this exceptional vulnerability is not worth any points to faerie characters as a Disadvantage, except insofar as it negates their Resurrection Advantage, as described below; rather, Star Iron should be treated like the most powerful magic items in other games, appearing at the climax of a scenario, and probably fought over by every faction in the game. (Its importance in the construction of Sorcerous Engines — p. 00 — can add to the fun.) Still, if travel to other planets or other universes ever becomes commonplace, the faeries will have a much greater problem.

### 3.3.2 Faerie Immortality and True Death

Faeries are, practically speaking, immortal. Even if their physical bodies are destroyed, their essential energies return to the Faerie Veil, where they gather together and reform the faerie over a few weeks. In addition, they need neither food nor water, though most have fallen into the habit of eating and drinking, and become unhappy if denied. (Strictly speaking, they don't have to breathe either, but that habit has become so ingrained that they can be suffocated and strangled.) However, there are some small limitations to all this. For one thing, a faerie who dies of injuries from Star Iron or through breaking its word suffers Final Death. Its energies are disrupted beyond repair; while other faeries may find traces of them within the Veil, they can never reunite, and the being's mind is completely gone. While this is very rare, the mere possibility makes faeries nervous. And for another thing, even temporary "death" can be a nuisance.

In *GURPS* terms, faeries have the Resurrection Advantage (see p. CI64). The fact that they reform in the Veil rather than where they were killed is treated as a special effect; it has the advantage of usually being a safe place, but the drawback that the character must find a doorway through which to return to Earth. In addition, faeries reform only slowly after temporary "death," at the rate of 2 Hit Points per week; this is not treated as worth anything as a Limitation (as the faerie *does* come back from the dead, and players should not complain about a minor delay). Of course, a faerie will be killed permanently by rare conditions such as a wound from Star Iron or breaking a promise (or by a specially-constituted Wild Hunt; see sidebar, p. 00), a -5% Limitation, and note that any character saved by Resurrection loses 25 character points, reflecting the fact that even faeries tend to be left a little chastened, shaken, and socially disadvantaged by such an experience.

In fact, faeries often return from the Veil with either a phobia about the circumstances of their "death," or an obsession with the idea of taking revenge. (With GM permission, these may be reflected in new disadvantages, helping to make up the 25 point loss.) Lesser faeries tend to the former response, so a bogey-infested house may be permanently cleared by "killing" the pests; they will usually take their mischief elsewhere after their return. Greater faeries, however, have vast pride, and can be horribly vengeful.

Incidentally, accounts suggest that faeries *may* even survive death by Star Iron. Exceptionally kind-hearted GMs may bear such possibilities in mind in the event of what should be True Death for a PC. However, at the very least, the faerie should be out of action for months or years, probably maimed in some way, and traumatised. To keep players properly respectful of such things, and to reward those who actually manage to engineer the True Death of a faerie foe, it is probably best to rule that True Death is certain and unequivocal.

Finally, one old faerie secret is that certain energy weapons that they encountered in a universe of star-spanning high-tech civilizations could kill them as surely as Star Iron. (In *GURPS* terms, these were TL10+ weapons — blasters or disruptors.) One or two faeries may have brought such weapons to New Europa in case of desperate emergencies, and dimension-hopping adventures might expose this fact, but mostly it should remain irrelevant in play.

### 3.3.3 Faerie Reproduction

When the faerie first discovered the material universes, they created physical forms in imitation of their surroundings. A few minor energy beings are still catching up with this process, drifting through gates from the Faerie Veil and shaping bodies for themselves, but there are few such stragglers left. Today, new faeries are mostly born, or remade.

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Faeries can mate with each other to produce children, but this requires a significant investment of both parents' personal energy to form the new being, diminishing the power of each, so it is quite rare. The children of such matings take after one parent or the other. Old legends of "faerie changelings" were often true, but with few faerie births, and the possibility that it infringes the First Compact (see p. 00), this tradition is mostly defunct. Likewise, faeries can marry mortals, but with no true flesh, faerie do not produce seed or eggs; rather, to become parents, they must again donate some of their life-force, which implies unusual commitment to the union from a faerie. If they only provide a minimum of energy, the child will be mortal, but usually with some odd, uncanny features. Few faeries these days have either the urge or enough spare life-energy to conceive true faerie offspring, but the Daoine Sidhe (see p. 00) show that matters were once otherwise.

(In game terms, a faerie who wishes to become a parent should suffer the loss of about 30–100 character points, usually taken from physical attributes or faerie powers. Children fathered by a dwarf cost only 5–10 points, which may come from unspent experience.)

Alternatively, at certain points in their lives, or under conditions of extreme stress or the imminent threat of True Death, a faerie may "Translate," converting its energy into a different form altogether. This usually involves a complete change of personality, and the loss of most of the old being's memories, especially if it occurs under stress, so it is not done lightly. (In game terms, it effectively creates a new character; a faerie PC who decides to translate becomes an NPC, or, with the GM's permission, a new PC for the same player, with no accumulated experience and only traces of the old PC's personality or memories.) However, it explains why some relatively newer breeds of faerie are said to be "descended" from older types; for example, the spriggans are the remnants of a race of powerful giants who were defeated and threatened with destruction.

### 3.3.4 The Seelie

The faeries are divided into two factions, albeit more loosely than humans like to think. The first, the Seelie, are ruled by Auberon, and are (more or less) friendly to humanity. At the least, they regard mortals and their world as scarce resources, to be exploited only with care and at length; the best of them have a genuine moral sense or love for those they aid. One common human belief is that the Seelie are bright and beautiful while the Unseelie are invariably hideous, but this is a simplification; this faction includes some wild-looking "nature spirits" and homely brownies. In fact, a few members of each species take up with the "wrong" court; Auberon claims the loyalty of one or two giants who have tired of carnage and destruction. He also has access to other resources and allies, many of them secret, and has linked the Seelie Court to the Second Compact (p. 00).

### 3.3.5 The Unseelie

On the other side, the Unseelie, under the leadership of the Adversary, are deeply hostile to humanity. They may make bargains and offer favors, but there is always a catch; humans such as Bismarck, who think to use Unseelie alliances to their advantage, are dealing with millennia of experience in double-dealing and a relentless, inhuman hostility.

Not that the Unseelie exactly see themselves as evil. Rather, they *know* that they are superior to humanity — immortal, unhindered by gross matter — and regard humans as toys at best, nuisances at worst. The occasional human power that can harm a faerie merely proves that the human race should be kept under tight control. However, thousands of years ago, Auberon tricked the Adversary into signing a great oath, the so-called "First Compact," which prohibits him from

making war on humanity. Unfortunately, it does not prevent individual Unseelie from engaging in private murders, but any large-scale attack would expose the Adversary himself to True Death, and human heroes and concerned Seelie can hunt down individual threats.

Bound by this ancient promise, and opposed by the Seelie, the Unseelie must work indirectly (which is not good for the Adversary's temper.) They have become expert at persuading human beings to destroy themselves, which is their current objective on New Europa.

Despising humanity, and enjoying destruction for its own sake, the Unseelie do tend to the monstrous in shape as well as behavior. They include malicious bogeys and trolls, but also predatory vampires who fully understanding the advantages of attractive appearance. Furthermore, the Adversary appears to have brought a number of creatures to New Europa from other universes, and these pets include monstrosities out of science fiction nightmares.

### 3.3.6 Racial Templates

The following are three faerie races recommended for use as player-characters in games with sufficiently high starting points levels. Other races certainly exist; see the sidebars, and the game supplement *The Memoirs of Auberon of Faerie* (from R.Talsorian Games) for details. Even leaving power levels aside, most species are either too restricted in their interests, too tied to one condition or environment, or too unremittingly evil, for use as PCs, but if players insist on being adventurous, it should be a simple enough matter to assemble a racial package from the descriptions.

#### 3.3.6.1 Brownies

*Attributes:* ST -5 [-40]; DX +4 [45].

*Racial Advantages:* Alertness +2 [10]; Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Extra Fatigue +7 [21]; Image [20]; Insubstantiality (can carry up No Encumbrance, +10%; only to pass through soft inorganic matter or dead wood, -50%) [48]; Magic Resistance +1 [2]; Morph (only to copy something seen directly with the naked eye, -10%, requires one minute of preparation, -20%, ceases working after one hour or if Stunned or Mentally Stunned, -20%) [20]; Perform a Great Work (see below) [90]; Resurrection (not after breaking word or death by Star Iron, -5%) [142]; Unaging [15]; Walk on Air (only while Insubstantial, -25%) [15].

*Racial Disadvantages:* Broad-Minded [-1]; Code of Honor (Brownie) [-5]; Dread (clothes turned inside-out, Occasional, 5 hex radius, can be overcome as per p. 00, -10%) [-14]; Hidebound [-5]; Inconvenient Size [-15]; Magical Insensitivity [-5]; Phobia (other faeries' Repulsions, apart from iron, and certain plants, see p. 00, mild) [-10]; Reduced Hit Points -5 [-25]; Reduced Move (running) -1 [-5]; Vow (always hold to the letter of promises) [-15]; Vulnerability (one level, to iron and steel weapons) [-15]; Vulnerability (three levels, to having broken a sworn promise) [-15].

*Racial Skills:* Camouflage-(IQ+2) [4]; Stealth-(DX+3) [16].

The second most numerous faeries of the Seelie Court, brownies are small — mostly under 10" tall — and rather homely, usually resembling hairy humans with pointed ears, slanting eyes, and misshapen noses, dressed in rags. They are also very popular with humanity, as they are devoted to making themselves useful.

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They are the prime example of faeries who will be driven off by gifts or payment (see p. 00), and they also dislike being watched or criticized while they work. There are several varieties of faerie in this broad category, each with their own favorite area of work; *Bwca*s help with household chores, *Grogans*, *Piskies*, and *Trow* around farmyards, *Killimoulis* in mills, and so on. A brownie with a specific area of activity will usually have a very high level of whatever skill it requires. Most are almost as physically weak as their size suggests, using Kindred Powers and skill to perform their work, but the *Fennoderee*, a harvester faerie, is startlingly strong (and not terribly bright).

Although they are vulnerable to iron weapons, brownies are not overly worried by the metal, which helps them fit in with human society, and one variety, *Gnomes*, are actually experts in clockwork and delicate machinery; they are believed to be related to the ancestors of the dwarfs, and the two races still get on very well. A gnome which has been driven mad by forced labor, or recruited to apply its skills to sabotage in some good cause, is now known as a *Gremlin*.

It costs 288 points to play a brownie. Brownies occasionally take to lives of adventure; many are pranksters, and the idea of playing practical jokes on villains may catch their fancy, while others simply choose to aid a specific adventurous human.

*Perform a Great Work:* The brownie Kindred Power consists of the ability to perform some huge, helpful, non-combat task in a single night, from sundown to sunup. The faerie must remain unobserved throughout, and if the task is interrupted, or simply cannot be completed, then nothing happens; brownies cannot perform half a task. Typically, the brownie can perform the work of ten men, although some are more or less effective; each "worker" after the brownie itself costs 10 points. (The cost for this is based on the likely cost for a Knack version of the *Create Servant* spell, p. M52, reduced to reflect the limited applications of the brownie's power.)

### 3.3.6.2 Daoine Sidhe

*Attributes:* ST +3 [30]; DX +2 [20]; IQ +1 [10]; HT +1 [10].

*Racial Advantages:* Attractive [5]; Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Enchantment (see below) [20]; Glamour (see below) [40]; Insubstantiality (can carry up No Encumbrance, +10%; only to pass through soft inorganic matter or dead wood, -50%) [48]; Magic Resistance +1 [2]; Morph (only to copy something seen directly with the naked eye, -10%, requires one minute of preparation, -20%, ceases working after one hour or if Stunned or Mentally Stunned, -20%) [20]; Resurrection (not after breaking word or death by Star Iron, -5%) [142]; Status +2 [10]; Unaging [15]; Walk on Air (only while Insubstantial, -25%) [15].

*Racial Disadvantages:* Broad-Minded [-1]; Dread (prayers and holy symbols and places, Common, 3 hex radius, can be overcome as per p. 00, -10%) [-24]; Dull [-1]; Magickal Insensitivity [-5]; Phobia (other faeries' Repulsions, *including* iron, and certain plants, see p. 00, mild) [-15]; Vow (always hold to the letter of promises) [-15]; Vulnerability (one level, to iron and steel weapons) [-15]; Vulnerability (three levels, to having broken a sworn promise) [-15].

*Racial Skills:* Stealth-(DX) [2].

As the earliest, most powerful faeries were diminished in numbers and strength in their adventures across multiple universes, they took to mating with humans to replenish their numbers. As noted above, this cost them dear in personal energy, but in those times, they could afford the price.

Strictly speaking, all members of the lineage born from such matings are known as *Daoine Sidhe* (pronounced "Theena Shee"). However, they are sharply divided between those who are members of the Seelie Court, and those who aid the Adversary. The former mostly take the "correct" species name; the latter are more often referred to as *Dark Lords*. Both are indeed the lords of the faerie folk; the *Daoine Sidhe*, taking the form of elegant humans (albeit with eldritch features and pointed ears), are welcomed as aristocrats in human high society. Some of the *Dark Lords* can pass equally well, if they lie about their loyalties; others are hideous in form.

*Daoine Sidhe* characters make capable adventurers who usually work well with humans, although their alien nature should emerge occasionally; they are sometimes whimsical and self-indulgent, and enjoy engaging in love affairs which shock human society. (They tend to have high levels of skills such as Erotic Art and Sex Appeal. *Most* realize that using their faerie powers for seduction is despised by humans, and will earn them too much trouble; anyway, it's little fun, and too many human women who suspect that a faerie is interested in them keep iron by their beds.) They sometimes marry; in that case, they are bound by tradition to take a Vow to end the marriage if their spouse ever sees them change shape. It costs 308 points to play a *Daoine Sidhe*.

*Dark Lord* NPCs can also be based on this package; they tend to have a very high Stealth skill, and the ability to create what is known as a "Terrifying Apparition" which can induce panic in a single human anywhere in sight. The *Dark Lord* must take one round of concentration, then win a quick contest of Wills (at +3 to the *Dark Lord* if the attack takes place in the dark). If the *Dark Lord* wins, the mortal must make an immediate Fright Check, and *also* turn and flee, continuing to run until he can make a Will roll at -4; if the mortal wins the quick contest, the *Dark Lord* cannot use the power on that individual again for 24 hours. Conversely, *Dark Lords* have more Repulsions, taking the form of the same Dread as the *Daoine Sidhe* but with a ten hex radius, severe Phobias concerning salt, iron, and inverted clothing, and also a mild Phobia regarding steel. Emotionally, they vary from the petty and spiteful to the vastly malevolent and cunning.

*Enchantment*: The *Daoine Sidhe* Kindred Power enables them to make themselves the trusted friend, guide, and advisor of a single mortal (a human or dragon, although dragons are usually highly resistant to the effect). Only one mortal can be enchanted at a time, but the power requires only that the faerie be able to see the victim directly (with no physical touch or eye contact required, unlike the similar powers possessed by some lesser faeries). *Daoine Sidhe* use the power with a special Mental/Hard skill, defaulting to IQ, and take one round of concentration to employ it; roll a quick contest between their skill and the victim's (Will + Magic Resistance). If the victim wins or later breaks the effect, the faerie cannot make another attempt on that individual for 24 hours; a draw means that the mortal is not enchanted, but the faerie can make another attempt at any time.

If the faerie asks the victim to do something clearly dangerous, or in clear violation of his basic beliefs or natural abilities, or if the faerie is confronted with a Repulsion while attempting to influence the mortal, roll another quick contest; the GM may give the mortal a modifier to their roll for more or less problematic moments. (A draw here leaves the mortal uncertain; the faerie must play subsequent events carefully to maintain control.) An enchantment is also automatically broken if the faerie dies or enters the Faerie Veil. Thus, faeries tend to be subtle with this power. (The cost, incidentally, is based on that of a Knack with the similar Loyalty spell, p. M68.)

*Glamour*: *Daoine Sidhe* are capable Glamour-workers, typically able to create "images" up to 30 yards away that not only appear real to all five senses, but are effectively solid — so a sword will cut, although a faerie cannot produce working mechanisms such as technological devices. Producing a Glamour takes a round of concentration, after which it can be easily sustained, unless the faerie wishes it to perform complex actions, which demand continued attention. A

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glamour cannot be created moving fast enough to cause damage (although a created object such as a knife can be thrown normally), and the image of a being or creature cannot exert any useful strength. Weapons produced this way will not break unless the faerie wishes them to (or unless touched by iron), but are otherwise of average quality. If another character has a chance to recognize errors in the illusion, a contest of Alertness against the faerie's IQ may be in order, but a Glamour still works if "seen through"; it merely fails to f

ool the observer. Creating and sustaining a large Glamour costs the faerie 1 fatigue per minute for every hex it covers after the first. If the faerie ever moves more than 100 feet from the image, it will fade uncontrollably after 1dx10 minutes. (The cost of this power is loosely based on that of various Knacks and the Image power.)

### 3.3.6.3 Pixies

*Attributes:* ST -6 [-50]; DX +3 [30].

*Racial Advantages:* Alertness +1 [5]; Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Glamour (see below) [60]; Extra Fatigue +6 [18]; Flight (Winged, -25%) [30]; Insubstantiality (can carry up No Encumbrance, +10%; cannot pass through living matter or ferrous metals, -30%) [64]; Love Charm (see below) [20]; Magic Resistance +1 [2]; Passive Defense +1 [25]; Resurrection (not after breaking word or death by Star Iron, -5%) [142]; Unaging [15].

*Racial Disadvantages:* Broad-Minded [-1]; Dull [-1]; Inconvenient Size [-15]; Magickal Insensitivity [-5]; Odious Personal Habit (romantic meddling) [-5]; Phobia (clothes turned inside-out, iron, prayers, and holy objects and places, severe) [-30]; Phobia (other faeries' Repulsions, and certain plants, see p. 00, mild) [-10]; Reduced Hit Points -6 [-30]; Reduced Move (running) -3 [-15]; Vow (always hold to the letter of promises) [-15]; Vulnerability (one level, to iron and steel weapons) [-15]; Vulnerability (three levels, to having broken a sworn promise) [-15].

*Racial Quirks:* Ludicrously Romantic; Reacts badly to failure. [-2]

*Racial Skills:* Camouflage-(IQ) [1]; Stealth-(DX+3) [16].

Occasionally confusingly referred to as "sprites," "elves," or "fairies," pixies are the most numerous of the Seelie Court, and also the "typical" faeries in the eyes of sentimental or naïve humans. Tiny (about 3" tall), with delicate features and the wings of (usually) a mayfly or butterfly, pixies dress in what look like leaves and petals, and flit where they choose.

In fact, pixies are every bit as romantic about humans as the views that humans take of *them*. Being generally free of bonds and restrictions, they are always looking for something to *do*, and thus meddling with humanity — especially with human love-lives, but also with artistic careers or anything else that interests them. Thanks to their Kindred Power, they cause no end of trouble. Unfortunately, trying to get rid of them or to make them stop often merely annoys them, and they can be determined and, at worst, vengeful.

However, pixies are genuinely good-natured and courageous. While too many of them have found that claiming to be "on a mission from the Seelie Court" is a useful way to impress other beings, some do serve as spies and scouts, and others have reacted bravely when they have stumbled over evil plots or mysteries. They often struggle with their Repulsions, as they are usually convinced that any attempts to drive them off are sure signs that they should be taking an interest. Pixie adventurers are therefore fairly common, if sometimes annoying to their allies. It costs 228 points to play a

pixie.

*Glamour:* Pixies are even more adept with this power than the Daoine Sidhe (see above). They can create Glamours at up to 100 yards (although they cannot exert fine control at points they cannot observe) and pay only 1 fatigue per minute for every 10 full hexes that the illusion covers, and the Glamour lasts 4d hours after they move out of range (if they wish to keep it running). Note, however, that large, continuing Glamours are almost invariably touched by iron or steel (and hence dissipated, or at least diminished) sooner rather than later.

*Love Charm:* The pixie Kindred Power is the ability to cause a being (which *may* be a faerie or a dwarf) to develop a consuming passion for another individual or object. Only one being can be effected at a time, and the power requires both that the faerie be able to see the victim directly, and that the victim can see the intended object of their love. (Of course, the object may well not return the feeling, though sometimes pixies work together in pairs to resolve this problem.) Pixies use the power with a special Mental/Hard skill, defaulting to IQ, and take one round of concentration to employ it; roll a quick contest between their skill and the victim's (Will + Magic Resistance). If the victim wins or later breaks the effect, the pixie cannot make another attempt on that individual for 24 hours; a draw means that the mortal is not enchanted, but the pixie can make another attempt at any time.

Most victims will not be immediately aware of the effect, although they will soon recognize their feelings, and faeries especially are likely to guess what has been done to them. The effect lasts as long as the pixie chooses, but is broken if the pixie dies or enters the Faerie Veil, and a few sorcerers also know a minor spell that negates it. Pixies are usually convinced that true love needs only the least help to blossom, and are often confused (and offended) when the feelings they have induced end as soon as the Love Charm is cancelled. Note that what the Charm creates is pure, passionate, but not completely unthinking love; if the loved one asks the victim to do something dangerous, or in clear violation of his basic beliefs or natural abilities, the result is likely to be impassioned argument, weeping, complaints to third parties, and general melodrama, not immediate obedience. Characters who realize what has been done to them will probably be annoyed, but may resist having the effect negated, depend

ing on their personality. (The cost, incidentally, is based on that of Daoine Sidhe Enchantment, as above; the ability to produce feelings for a third party is balanced by the limited range of actual feelings produced.)

Pixies are also quite powerful with their powers of Etherealness (see their Advantages), but are negligible as shapeshifters, at most assuming a shimmering formlessness when they become insubstantial.

### 3.4 Relations Among the Races

The various intelligent races of New Europa coexist reasonably well — better than one might expect, given their history. Formal manners often help; no-one is tactless enough to mention that dragons used to regard humanity as a food source, rather than merely being coolly capable investors and obsessive purchasers of antiquities. Humans prefer to think of faeries as helpful Brownies and elegant Daoine Sidhe, rather than capricious Nymphs or baleful Banshees. The Unseelie are regarded as a menace, of course, but most people remind themselves that such beings can be repelled by iron or simple charms, or avoided with a little good sense. As for dwarfs, they are admired and respected for their skills, which have seemed ever more useful as the Industrial Revolution has progressed.

The other races, not being human, have different opinions. Dragons are always cool and detached but usually curious;



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ever confident in their power to crush threats, they can judge their neighbors in terms of useful value. But their intelligence, experience, and long view mean that they do not evade issues; once they recognize a problem, they do *whatever* they think necessary to resolve it. They tolerate the Seelie, remembering their interesting first encounter with Auberon millennia ago, and mostly avoid the Unseelie as pests; the danger of growing infestations has drawn them into cautious alliance with the Second Compact. Dwarfs, they can tolerate — it is said that dragon–magick was even involved in the creation of the race — though they sometimes find themselves in competition with these beings for comfortable caves and underground treasures. Some dragons collect dwarf craftsmanship; unfortunately, they do not always pay the going price, and some have even been known to collect the *craftsmen*, so dwarfs have a long–established suspicion of dragons. All this makes dwarf fire resistance a nuisance to dragons.

Faeries, on the other hand, are creatures of their uncreative natures and mutable forms. Bound by ancient habits and self–inflicted rules, they actually see humans almost as humans see them; mercurial, unpredictable, and unstable. Humans can break their given word, which is a terror and a mystery to faeries, and have this bizarre capacity for creating new ideas as if from nowhere. At the same time, humans seem incapable of comprehending even the simplest rule or most obvious personal necessity, or of remembering a plain instruction for more than a few years. While the Unseelie certainly want to exploit humans, who they regard as creatures of base clay fit only to serve, there is also some element of fear in this attitude; humans can be uniquely dangerous to faeries. The Seelie, contrariwise, do not aid humanity out of pure kindness; for some of them, helpfulness is simply the rule to which they have bound themselves to give their lives shape, and for others, humans are a wonderful source of novelty that should not be *wasted*.

Compared to humans, in fact, faeries find dwarfs perfectly straightforward, if a little mad; they are, after all, fellow faeries who have bound themselves to flesh in exchange for immunity to the nuisance of iron. The fact that this has rendered dwarfs mortal is surely too high a price, but each to their own. The dwarfs themselves return the judgement; after all, to them, many faeries are actually prospective wives. They prefer to remain out of "family squabbles" among the faerie races, but have slowly been drawn to oppose the Unseelie, at least by default; if the Unseelie brought about the destruction of the world, the dwarfs would have a problem. Humans, to the sturdy and irascible dwarfs, are often unreliable and silly, asking far too many stupid questions, but they do sometimes produce some decent craftsmen, and human business and human beer are things that any dwarf can appreciate.

### 3.5 Others

The above races are commonplace in Europe and adjacent lands, and sometimes venture beyond. However, none of them are quite so free to go where they like as they like to imply. The dragons have certainly flown across the whole globe, and some have settled in every mountain range on the planet, but they seem to congregate most in Europe and Asia — perhaps because that is where they have been associating with humans for longest. Dwarfs, too, started in this continent, and still have their largest communities here. The faeries, however, who can transcend space, seem to be limited by even more shadowy forces.

Actually, it is unclear how many legendary creatures are in fact faeries. Auberon certainly acknowledges the Arabian Djinn as cousins, and the *Peri* of Persia have a faerie air to them, but the *Gaki* and *Tengu* of Japan, say, or the *Rakshasa* of India, may be *something else*. Certainly, there are known to be malign beings of a supernatural nature who can be called *Demons*; devout folk have no doubt as to their origins, while a few cynical materialist scientists mutter about other universes beyond the Faerie Veil, or even constructs of magickal energy. There are also undead; some of these are mere walking corpses, restored to mobility by necromantic magick, with a semblance of the abilities they possessed in life, and

others (such as the mummies reported from Egypt) may be the product of similar but more sophisticated magick.

One thing that is known for a fact, if not much discussed in Europe, is that the Americas have native magickal beings of great power. Amongst other things, it seems that these "spirits" do not always make the faeries welcome in their territory, explaining the lack of faerie migration to the New World. It seems that these beings are genuinely native to their lands, and that they often choose to ally themselves with the Native American people; one suggestion is that they are partly the product of generations of human belief acting on the raw magick of the country (although it might not be tactful to suggest this to them). It also seems that some secret magick or power associated with the U.S.A. itself may act to suppress these beings; certainly, their influence is far more limited east of the Mississippi, although it is quite enough to deter faerie visitors. (Which may just be a matter of established faerie habits, of course.) See *Sixguns and Sorcery*, from R.Talsorian Games, for more on this.

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### 3.5.1 Dragon Memory

Dragons say that they remember everything that their ancestors ever witnessed. They will happily demonstrate, describing the creatures of the age of the dinosaurs, or the domestic arrangements of historical figures. No-one has ever caught them inventing such memories, and their memory for events in their own lives is certainly extraordinary.

However, this power raises numerous questions, which dragons do not deign to answer in detail. After all, dragons are claiming access to *millions* of years of memory, and it is hard to see how such density of information can be fitted into even a dragon's skull. At the very least, it seems safe to guess that dragons can filter and sort old memories, discarding a few million years of chasing primitive mammals here and there. This process could be conscious or unconscious, at the GM's option. As to how these memories are stored and passed on; the simplest assumption is that dragons encode memories into their genes, implying that they will only remember an ancestor's life up to the conception of the next in the line. However, it could as easily be a magickal process, with the memories being transferred psychically, and perhaps being sorted and edited in the process — in which case, a dragon which was orphaned young, before its ancestor had finished passing on everything, would surely feel a terrible sense of loss. (Dragons certainly seem to be born knowing useful skills such as the Firecast, but perhaps the first transfers take place while they are still in the egg or womb.) Perhaps dragons even have access to an intangible racial consciousness, akin to the "Akashic Memory" spoken of by some human mystics, in which case their knowledge will not be limited to that of their linear ancestors, though they may still prefer to concentrate on family lore.

Or perhaps — at the GM's option — the truth is stranger and a little darker. Humans don't see many dragon funerals. Perhaps they involve magickal or biological arrangements to pass on memories — such as ritual cannibalism . . .

For game purposes, dragon memory is represented with the combination of the 30-point Eidetic Memory and 40-point Racial Memory Advantages. This is a formidable enough combination, but GMs who want to keep dragons as strange and powerful NPCs can always modify or enhance it in any way they choose.

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### 3.5.2 Dragons and the Second Compact

Although dragons are solitary and independent-minded creatures, they do have a society and even a hierarchy of sorts, recognizing some of the oldest and most powerful of their number as leaders and policy-makers when such are needed. At present, the "king" of dragonkind in Europe is Verithrax Draconis. Fortunately for the Second Compact, he has chosen to ally his people with that cause.

The dragons have taken sides because they are, ultimately, creatures of this Earth and of magick. They have been persuaded that the Unseelie wish ultimately to destroy or enslave the world, and the route they are taking to that goal — runaway human industrialization, with extensive and deliberate use of iron all across the world — is intended to suppress magickal energy flows. While the Unseelie and their allies rarely assault dragons directly at present, they are demonstrably a threat to the race. Thus, dragons swore to the Second Compact, fought alongside Bayernese forces in the recent war with Prussia, and continue to aid in the conflict. Some dragons are also personal friends to several of the leading humans of the Compact, especially King Ludwig, which doubtless helped them make the decision.

However, the alliance is as cautious and provisional as most dragon decisions. They may ally and fight with humans, but dragons are no-one's soldiers. They are dependable when they make a promise, but their own interests will always come first. Furthermore, the dragons of the East are not in any way bound by Verithrax's policy, and are accustomed to *rule* human nations on their own terms. While Unseelie plots and incursions may sometimes drive them into alliance with the Second Compact, that is always likely to be a difficult relationship.

### 3.5.3 Oriental Dragons

Dragons in Europe are solitary mountain-dwellers who occasionally descend into human society to do business, acquire interesting collectibles, or find friends or mates. However, the species wandered the entire globe long before humanity evolved, and have settled in other areas, too. In fact, the area of greatest dragon power may in fact be Asia.

To put it simply, when New Europeans speak of the ruler of China as the "Dragon Emperor," this is not a symbol or a metaphor. For centuries if not thousands of years, the ruling dynasties of the Empire have usually possessed at least dragon ancestry, and the rulers have not infrequently been full dragons. Other ruling houses across the continent have sometimes possessed similar connections.

However, this does not mean that China is completely ruled by dragons. All else aside, there are simply not enough such creatures to make this possible. The nobles, civil servants and generals of the land have usually been much as in our world; the Dragon Emperor has sometimes dictated policy, and sometimes been a comfortable figurehead, leaving the actual rule to the scurrying humans who enjoy such things. For that matter, most Asian dragons are much like their European cousins, living alone with their collections, albeit that they may have even more and stronger connections to the local government.

It seems that the present dynasty produces quite active rulers, and the present Emperor is working hard to keep intrusions by human outsiders under control. However, he may ultimately be no more successful than his human counterparts in our history. Western dragons visiting China may be treated with deep respect by humans, but they cannot depend on the friendship of the local dragon-lords; while they acknowledge kinship, they are not entirely immune to the sense of cultural superiority often displayed by their human subjects.

### 3.5.4 Winning a Name

Dwarfs are not particularly concerned with social status in human terms, but they do have one great concern; the desire to win a Name. This is, in fact, very likely to be behind the appearance of dwarfs encountered adventuring or working in human society.

To explain; a dwarf receives one personal name at birth. Perhaps unfortunately, this is usually bestowed by his faerie mother, which means that some rough, tough dwarfs own to names such as "Moonbeam." This may help explain why all dwarfs are so concerned with gaining a *second* Name (with a capital "N"), which is granted by popular acclaim, or the pronouncement of a dwarfhold's king, when dwarf society recognizes that the individual has invented or discovered something new. Especially noted contemporary dwarfs include Rhyme Enginemaster (see p. 00) and Elrich ClockworkMaker, creator of the mechanical servant–automaton and the clockwork entertainment.

In game terms, gaining a Name grants the dwarf character Status 1. Most humans are at least vaguely aware of this system, and give Named dwarfs precedence accordingly. Dwarfs of Status 0 will almost always have a –5 point Obsession with the acquisition of a Name. This is so much a part of their psychology that it can be considered a part of the racial package, and does not count towards maximum personal Disadvantages. It is recommended that PC dwarfs start out Nameless (and Obsessed), giving them a motivation to adventure. If a PC dwarf gains a Name, they will have to buy off their Obsession and buy Status 1 with earned experience; if they do not have the points, they may have some temporary problems getting their achievements universally accepted, or the GM may assign them temporary Disadvantages to cover the gap, or simply "lend" them the points.

If dwarf society is seriously divided over whether a Name is deserved, the dwarf will usually remain Obsessed with convincing the doubters, although some may use the Name and suffer a negative Reputation with the minority. A few dwarfs with Names may have the Odious Personal Habit of condescending to those without, but most feel that they fully proved their worth, and need not be rude to others; most respect others' attempts to rise. Insulting or questioning a dwarf's Name is about as sensible as insulting a human's (or a dwarf's) mother.

### 3.5.5 Dwarfholds

Dwarf communities — *Dwarfholds* — are an important, if often hidden, feature in the economic geography of New Europa. Dwarfs always site these communities underground, usually in natural caves, but they do not usually engage in mining (although those that do are good at it); they mostly leave that trade to humans and various underground faerie races. Dwarfs are craftsmen by nature, and to them, a cave is simply a secure and comfortable site for a workshop or factory. Some holds are actually sited in volcanic areas; as dwarfs are completely immune to heat and flame, they can use molten lava and geysers for light and power.

Since the Industrial Revolution, dwarfholds have changed from resembling huge workshops to great factory complexes, with miniature railways running across the floor to shift materials and components around. Windows and chimneys jutting out of a mountain in great clumps are a sure sign of a dwarfhold.

The "king" of a dwarfhold has Status 2 or higher, depending on the hold's size, but the position is not (usually) hereditary; rather, the members of the community elect somebody they respect, probably by acclamation rather than any kind of secret ballot or organized democracy. Because respect in dwarf society is largely based on possession of a Name

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(see p. 00, sidebar), the king will (almost) certainly have achieved that, but most sensible dwarfs look for a king who will handle the hold's business well.

Although Names are traditionally given for craft skill and inventions, some kings may have Names such as "Dealmaker" or "Organizer." On the other hand, any Name counts for so much that its possessor may well be able to win an election or persuade a group of other dwarfs to start a new hold with him in charge.

Holds trade raw materials with each other and sometimes exchange skills, often sending specialists to assist with some project. Large-scale collaborations may run for years. Holds also sell their finished products to humans; they used to be noted for their jewelry, high-quality swords and clever toys, but today they are expert industrialists, albeit still with a bias towards fine design and quality craftsmanship. In return, they buy grain, livestock, and beer.

### 3.5.6 Dwarfs and the Steam Age

To put it mildly, dwarfs took to the Industrial Revolution with enthusiasm. While they cannot claim credit for starting it — although they have more true creativity than faeries, they perhaps still lack the human edge of inspired invention — they adopted steam power and industrial production with enthusiasm, and modern dwarfholds resemble factories rather than the workshops of old. Dwarfs might privately claim to do it all *better* than humans, but by and large they regard human engineers as near-equals, happily corresponding over new ideas while pursuing their own obsession with invention and improvement. Edison and Brunel are every bit as well-regarded in dwarf society as at home. Where dwarfs perhaps have the edge is in materials technology; with their supernatural sense for the subject, they can achieve immediately things that humans must accomplish through months of experimentation. Dwarfs are experimenting with aluminum alloys and titanium (putting them a good two *GURPS* tech levels ahead of humans).

In RPG terms, note that the archetypal dwarf PC will not be the party's axe-wielding front-line fighter, but the group's best engineer. Dwarfs *are* often useful in a fight, but they are even more useful to keep machinery running and perhaps rebuild it to work better (so long as they can refrain from trying the latter in the middle of a fight). Many can be played as classic "nerds" behind the heavy build and gruff voice.

### 3.5.7 Dwarfs Across the Globe

Dwarfs have emigrated to most parts of the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, and have had less trouble settling in some areas than the faeries; being essentially mortal, they are not seen as a threat by other magickal beings. However, the race remains strongest and most numerous in Europe. Access to ready supplies of beer and pork sausages, the presence of female faeries to court, and more recently, proximity to the heartlands of the Industrial Revolution, have been pressing considerations from the dwarfish point of view.

Some have settled in the U.S.A., where the local suspicion of Old World powers and beings is mollified by the understanding that dwarfs are as practical and gadget-obsessed as any Yankee tinkerer; gunsmiths (including Sam Colt) and industrialists employ dwarf expertise in their drive for progress. West of the Mississippi, however, dwarfs are much rarer; the native spirits may be prepared to tolerate them, but dwarfs have little interest in lands where metalworking is rare. Some may show up in the Bear Flag Empire and the Republic of Texas, where ingenuity is appreciated and a certain amount of metal-crafting industry is being developed.

One other region where a few dwarfs do dwell is the Ottoman Empire. The dwarfs' many, colorful, often contradictory legends seem to agree that the race came into being somewhere in this part of the world, and that they taught metalwork to the first human cities of the Fertile Crescent; the dwarf race has a certain sentimental attachment to Mesopotamia. Ottoman dwarfs are colorful folk, with their shaven heads, thick beards, silk clothes, and huge slippers; they tend to make their livings as craftsmen and jewelers, and to marry the fabled *Peri*, the female faeries of Persia, or occasionally female djinn.

### 3.5.8 The Faerie Veil

The native realm of the faeries was originally a glowing void of pure energy. Intelligence probably developed here as a random fluctuation, and survived because it could shape the energy to sustain it. However, when these beings found (or were offered) a way to enter universes of solid matter, things began to change.

Interested by what they found elsewhere, powerful faeries began to shape "lands" out of the energy of the Veil. However, lacking true imagination, what they produced were imitations of the medieval Europe into which they had ventured, albeit bigger, brighter, and often distorted. Thus, they are full of gigantic castles (sometimes floating in the air), wild forests, oddly-shaped islands, and green cows. Among the known lands are misty *Avalon*, the citadel of *Dis* (the Adversary's hunting-lodge and prison) in its frozen wastes, the largely-abandoned plains of *Mag Mor*, and Auberon's capital of *Tir Nan Og* and its associated wilderness of *Lough Lean*. Physical laws are sometimes different in these lands — underwater realms where humans can breath water are the least of it — and time sometimes passes in odd ways, faster or slower than in the mortal worlds, or even in perpetual loops.

Today, only Auberon, the Adversary, and a few human sorcerers can create gates to the Faerie Veil, and probably only the first two can make them permanent — but plenty of gates already exist. Most take the traditional forms — rings of standing stones, ancient misty woodland groves, the surfaces of remote lakes — but some are seemingly innocuous patches of remote ocean (over significant sites on the seabed), or doorways in unremarkable old buildings. One gate to the Unseelie realm of the Flaming Hills is located beneath Mount Etna. The largest concentration of gates is in Ireland, a country with ancient associations for the faeries; most faerie lands have at least one entry there.

Gates are opened from the earthly side by use of the faerie power of Etherealness or by magickal spells; they close at the opener's command, or five minutes after he stops exerting willpower. Anyone can pass through them from the Veil to Earth, with no special ability required, so faerie lords who take prisoners there are careful to hide the way back.

### 3.5.9 Faerie Weapons

Their fear of iron gives faeries problems finding weapons, and creating swords using Glamour is chancy. However, ancient faerie smiths found an alternative, now known to the dwarfs; "Faerie Silver" and "Faerie Gold," mysterious alloys of non-ferrous metals that are strong as steel. Faerie weapons and armor thus cost twice as much as standard weapons of equivalent quality, and are usually available in any area with a large faerie or dwarf population. The only problem is that these metals cannot be used to make firearms; a chemical reaction renders the barrels brittle.

Other faeries carry "elfshot" bows or crossbows, which is one thing that causes mortals to distrust them. (Very small faeries can carry miniature short bows with ST below the normal minimum, or the equivalent of a pistol crossbow, p. CII23, in both hands.) Both weapons and arrows are made of yew-wood, and the arrow-points carry a special poison

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that is activated by contact with this. It effects "natural" creatures, including humans and dragons, but not faeries or dwarfs. The arrow does normal damage when it hits, although metal armor counts double against the wooden points. If the arrow penetrates any armor, the victim suffers an additional 1d damage per day thereafter ("wasting away"), which cannot be prevented or healed by normal treatment. However, treatment by one of the rare faerie healers, or by a human doctor with *Magery*, magickal training, *and* training in *Physician* skill, prevents further harm on a *Physician* skill roll (one attempt per day), and can help restore lost points normally. Also, if the victim enters the Faerie Veil, the poison is immediately negated.

Any faerie or dwarf with *Poisons* skill will know the recipe for elfshot poison, but a mortal would require a large Unusual Background; it is a traditional faerie secret. The ingredients for 1d doses' worth can be found with a *Poisons* or *Naturalist* roll in one day within the Faerie Veil or in a wilderness; brewing the stuff requires a day and a *Poisons* roll. Faeries may trade it to each other (but not to mortals) for favors; few have enough taste for material possessions to *sell* it. (Starting faerie PCs may pay a nominal \$10 per elfshot arrow for up to one quiver—full.)

Lastly, some brownies and others simply carry slings to hurl stones; while mortals sometimes fear these as "elfshot," they are completely mundane.

### 3.5.10 The Wild Hunt

The Wild Hunt is a faerie institution, its existence explicitly permitted by the First Compact (p. 00). For despite what many humans think, it is not a purely Unseelie phenomenon. It is perfectly possible for Seelie faeries to call it, and some do, when a mortal offends them enough.

It is a gathering of at least 20 faerie, rarely more than 50. (Hunts of up to 100 are legendary; they would be hideously powerful.) A single faerie must make a *Bard* or *Leadership* roll to catch the group's attention; if this is successful, make a *Reaction* roll for the group as a whole, applying all modifiers for the attitudes of the most *and* the least favorable members towards the leader. (So if some react to him at +3 and others at -2, the reaction is at +1). On a Good result, the hunt will attack a single human; on a Very Good result, it may ride against every human in the area. If and *only* if there is a human present, armed with iron and willing to join the group, and the reaction is Very Good, it can attack a faerie — and its attacks will then inflict True Death. Once it is called, any other faerie hearing its horns must win a quick contest of *Will* against the leader's *Leadership*, or be drawn in.

A Hunt generates powerful Glamours. The leader always takes the form of a great horned man; his followers may appear as spectral hounds, dark riders on coal-black horses, or swirling phantoms. Any weapons they wield count as elfshot (p. 00), and they can all fly, with a level of Enhanced Move if there are more than 30 faeries involved, and project Terrifying Apparitions like Dark Lords (p. 00). All attributes, *Will*, and combat skills for all members become equal to 10 + (number of faeries in the hunt/10), and most *Repulsions* are ignored. However, the Hunt will not enter holy ground, and its members act as if they have a mild *Phobia* concerning prayers and holy symbols, and a *Dread* of Star Iron. The Hunt lasts from dusk to dawn, after which its members must rest.

Even dragons flee the Hunt; it runs berserk, ignoring individual casualties and tearing its victims apart. Only groups of dwarfs can stand up to it, sometimes breaking out secret caches of Star Iron weapons.

### 3.5.11 Other Faeries

There are numerous species of faerie; the following are a few of the more common types. See *The Memoirs of Auberon of Faerie* (from R.Talsorian Games) for more details.

#### 3.5.11.1 Bogeys

**ST:** 12 **PD/DR:** 0/0

**DX:** 11 **Damage:** 1d–2 cut

**IQ:** 9 **Reach:** C

**HT:** 11/8 **Speed/Dodge:** 6/8

The rank-and-file of the Unseelie Court, bogeys are as usually small as brownies, or smaller, but startlingly strong. They are also malicious, petty, and cruel. Their natural shapes are ugly, though not hideous. They are stupid and gullible, but cunning enough as spies and assassins (with Stealth–14), and persistently vengeful. They have a Dread of clothing worn inside-out, iron, and holy symbols, and hate human religion and priests. The damage listed assumes that they are using a crude (non-ferrous) blade, or giving themselves claws or fangs through shapeshifting.

Their command of most faerie powers is mediocre, although they enjoy using their etherealness to float through the air rather than walking. Their Kindred Power is the "Evil Eye"; if they spend a turn concentrating and win a quick contest of wills with a mortal in direct line of unaided sight, all the victim's abilities and dice rolls are at –2 for as long as the bogey chooses. However, a bogey can only inflict the Evil Eye on one human at a time, a human can only be under one such effect, and if the attacks fails, the bogey cannot try again on the same human for 24 hours.

Protection by any of the bogey's Repulsions prevents the Evil Eye, but does not remove it once it is in place; that demands use of the Grant Luck ability possessed by some Seelie faeries, the True Death of the bogey, or *very* rare human magick. However, bogeys are so petty that they are forever finding new targets for their Evil Eye.

There are numerous varieties of bogey; *Boggarts* lead human children into mischief; *Bogles* actually choose to help random humans, by playing vicious tricks on their enemies; *Goblins* live in tribes; *Imps* act as familiars to unwise sorcerers (while spying on them); *Redcaps* are brawny killers who lurk in old buildings and dye their hats in human blood; *Spriggans* are the remnants of ancient giants, can still temporarily assume monstrous size in battle, and also gain extra power when working in a group, and so on.

### 3.5.12 Other Faeries (continued)

#### 3.5.12.1 Faerie Animals

Some faeries choose a "natural" form based on terrestrial animals rather than humans. (These should not be confused with the "pets" created by some powerful faeries, mostly Unseelie, who manipulate the physical forms of natural, material creatures. Such "pets" are of only animal intelligence, whereas true "faerie animals" are thinking beings.) Noted



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examples include Unseelie *Black Dogs* who enjoy terrorizing human travelers, and who may be confused with the more amiable, if mischievous, *Padfoots*, and the territorial *Boobrie*, which resembles a giant heron. Faerie pigs (*Arkan Sonneys*) and cattle often mingle with farm livestock, sometimes making them calmer, or guarding them, sometimes leading them away to the Veil. All have a Dread of iron, and some avoid holy symbols and ground, though the canine *Church Grim*s actually act as defenders of churches. All also have at least a little power over mundane animals, and can project sounds so that they seem to originate elsewhere (the "Stealthy Tread"), a trick they use to confuse and panic humans.

### 3.5.12.2 Fetches

Fetches are expert impersonators, using powerful Glamour to remain invisible while they study a specific human, then shapeshifting and Disguise and Acting skills (each at 15 or better) to impersonate them exactly. Humans tend to find this unnerving or terrifying, and there are many legends about the perils of meeting one's double, but in fact, fetch impersonators are usually harmless and even protective. They develop a psychic link with "their" human, and sometimes act as bodyguards, but their obsessive enthusiasm sometimes makes them highly inconvenient to have around.

### 3.5.12.3 Phookas

Phookas are powerful, strong-willed, and impetuous. They appear in both the Seelie and Unseelie Courts, and may switch sides according to mood. Expert shapeshifters, they have one preferred form, often an ordinary or gigantic domestic animal, but can also give themselves body-parts from several species at once, such as a serpent head, hawk wings, and goat legs. As they usually have decent attributes (around ST 15, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 13) and can give themselves animal abilities and claws, horns and fangs at will, they make fierce fighters. However, their other faerie powers are weak. They sometimes attach themselves to an individual human, to guard or harass according to whim. Fortunately, they Dread iron and holy symbols, places, and prayers.

## 3.5.13 Other Faeries (continued)

### 3.5.13.1 Haunts and Spectres

Although often confused, these two categories of more-or-less immaterial faerie are very different. The (mostly) Unseelie haunts base their form on unliving, ephemeral objects or immaterial forces — sounds, lights, maimed bodies — while the Seelie spectres take the appearance of living things, usually hounds or human females; they appear translucent, but are in fact solid to the touch, and not even especially adept with their Etherealness.

Haunts include *Will-O-Wisps* (floating spheres of light which can exert minor telekinetic effects), *Jack in Irons* (originally sentient *sounds*, now granted semi-solid form as hideous phantom giants and sworn to uncomfortable loyalty to the Seelie Court), *Fachans* (which have a solid body resembling half a human corpse, split from head to crotch), and *Haunt Trolls* (the original, cowardly but very sneaky, monsters under the bed and things that go bump in the night). All have a Terrifying Apparition power like that of the Dark Lords (see main text, p.00), and spend most of their time finding chances to use it.

Spectres (including the female *Banshees* and canine *Gabriel Ratchets*) are not hostile, but they can foretell danger and disasters, concerning which they have a morbid curiosity, so humans associate them with evil events. They also have

Stealth–17, giving them an unnerving tendency to startle people.

### 3.5.13.2 Kobolds and Leprechauns

Along with the brownies, the Seelie Court includes other small, helpful faerie types. Kobolds are mining faeries, with a supernatural ability to smell out rare metals and widely varying taste for the work of digging; unlike brownies, they require negotiated payments for their efforts. Their cousins the leprechauns (known as *Clurichans* when they get morosely fighting drunk, which they do quite often) are faerie shoemakers; their skill in this is literally supernatural, as they can make shoes which force the wearer to dance whenever certain types of music is played. (Only a leprechaun or a priest can remove the shoes thereafter.) They can also Grant Luck to humans (the reverse of the Bogey Evil Eye, giving +2 to all dice rolls), and some have the kobold sense for rare metals. However, their drunken tempers and habitual pranks gain leprechauns some toleration among the Unseelie (except bogeys).

### 3.5.14 Other Faeries (continued)

#### 3.5.14.1 Nature Faeries

This is a broad category covering a wide range of beings, including female Forest Women, Lake Ladies, and Nymphs, and masculine Pans, Fauns and Satyrs. All are closely tied to wild places; Lake Ladies actually draw power from the lakes in which they dwell, while Nymphs can merge into a specific natural object (*Dryads* with a tree, *Neriedes* a seashore, and so on), and more powerful species not only guard great tracts of land, but can control wildlife and natural phenomena within their domain. The males embody the brute force of nature, although some also have well–merited fame as lovers; the females, who often have the same power of Allure as Water Demons (see below), live up to a more feminine stereotype, although they are not above keeping human mates for under supernatural control. Forest Women, who have powers to heal and to enhance the creative abilities of mortal artists, seem less dangerous, but their aid is always granted on their own terms, and they are truly terrible when annoyed.

#### 3.5.14.2 Water Demons

Lesser, nastier breeds of faerie also live in water; those categorized together as *Water Demons*. These all have the Kindred Power of Allure; if they can win a quick contest of Will with a mortal, they can hold his or her attention, usually in the form of fascination or desire. (Water demons are all hideous in their natural form, but can use Glamour or Shapeshifting to appear otherwise.) Most have developed the habit of using this power to attract mortals to kill and eat, although one of the horse–shaped breeds, the *Kelpies*, sometimes content themselves with taking mortals for wild and terrifying rides. Other known breeds included the female *Jenny Greenteeth* (or "River Hag"), and the monstrous humanoid *Vodyany* of Eastern Europe. All are vicious fighters, at least as strong as most adult men, but prefer to use their faerie powers.

#### 3.5.14.3 Merfolk and Selkies

Along with some nymphs (the *Nereides* and *Oceanides*), these are faeries of the oceans and seas. Merfolk are tribal, and although not malicious, sometimes have the bad habit of using Allure and the ability to shift temporarily to human form to attract and enthrall human mates; Selkies can also shift, more freely, between human and seal forms, and have developed good relations with humanity through a helpful and cooperative approach.

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### 3.5.15 Other Faeries (continued)

#### 3.5.15.1 Giants, Ogres and Trolls

The true faerie giants were Unseelie creatures of vast and terrifying physical power. However, this breed has now been almost wiped out, the few survivors having withdrawn to remote wildernesses or the Faerie Veil, or having foresworn violence. However, remnants of the race exist in the form of ogres and trolls.

These two terms are largely interchangeable, although "ogres" tend to be big, *very* strong, and hairy, while "trolls" are usually thin, pointy-headed, and scaly. Typically, they have ST 20–40, DX 11, IQ 8, and live up to their reputation for brute force and ignorance. They can sometimes project a Terrifying Apparition like that of a Dark Lord (p. 00), but are otherwise largely incompetent with their faerie powers — although some can shapeshift well enough to infiltrate human society, at least until their foul tempers slip. The only problem is that they have *no* significant Repulsions; they have to be beaten on their own terms of blunt violence.

#### 3.5.15.2 Vampires

The creatures known to New Europa as vampires are usually actually faeries, not undead (although there is some evidence that undead blood-drinkers may *also* exist). Various species exist, but all wear female guise ("Dracula" is a Dark Lord, *not* a vampire), and use Glamours and the power of Allure (see sidebar, p. 00) to attract victims whose blood they drink. They are startlingly strong, fast and stealthy, and each have use of one animal shape that they can employ easily and freely with their shapeshifting powers, but lack any great talent for Etherealness, and suffer a large set of faerie Repulsions; however, ideas about garlic and open coffins are human myths. One type, the *Leanan Sidhe*, can increase a human's creativity, in exchange for his blood and health.

### 3.5.16 Arabian Djinn

The fabled Djinn of Arabia are, in fact, a variety of faerie. Their ancestors spread to this region in around 1000 B.C., and claimed the rank of lords there, building great castles and citadels in the desert and beneath the sea. However, a great human sorcerer, King Solomon of Israel, defeated them, creating spells that could bind them and trapping them or forcing them to swear oaths to leave humanity in peace. The heritage of his arts remains strong in the region, and most djinn now avoid humanity. A few, incidentally, are sincere converts to Islam.

The Djinn are a proud, often solitary breed; although some are associated with the Seelie or (more often) Unseelie courts, many prefer to keep themselves to themselves. Thus, although dangerous individually, they play little part in greater secret battles for control of this Earth.

There are a number of broad categories of Djinn. Those who use that name alone are powerful but not unduly evil, whereas their cousins the *Ifrit* are decidedly Unseelie. The *Jann* are servants of the greater lords, and rarely have enough initiative to take sides. Lastly, *Ghuls* are vicious, corpse-eating monsters, whose sole substantial powers are the ability to read a mortal's desire from his mind and shapeshifting, which they use cleverly together.

The other types have a wide range of faerie powers; some can match brownies for performing Great Works, while other can reshape their bodies to enjoy dwelling in furnaces, fly faster than any hawk, or reach across hundreds of miles to

acquire treasure from secret stores. See the stories of the *Arabian Nights* (or *GURPS Arabian Nights*) for some idea as to their capabilities. However, they share the common faerie aversion to iron, and the Seal of Solomon acts as a powerful Repulsion to them. Some still wear iron bracelets, imposed on them by Solomon himself, which restrict their powers. In fact, almost every Middle Eastern sorcerer is at least aware of a Lorebook supposedly written by Solomon himself, which describes ways to control the djinn.

## 3.6 Spell Books

The following are the better-known Lorebooks of New European Sorcery:

### 3.6.1 Agrivicca Rexus' Realm of Illusion

This book is the property of the Freemasons, and always (nowadays) takes the form of a heavy volume of illuminated manuscripts, bound in brass covers with a heavy lock. It is legendarily ascribed to a figure known as "Agrivicca Rexus," who is said to have written it in 1298 B.C., though similar spells are known to many sorcerous traditions around the world.

It gives use of just two effects, but the first is very versatile:

*Illusions of the Mind and Body* are exactly that. Illusions may affect any of the five senses; Definitions of a spell based on this effect encompass its complexity, size, duration, and mobility, and how well the caster knows the subject if attempting to create the illusion of a particular thing or being. Base Cost: 6 (emotional).

*True Vision* allows the caster to dispel any and all magickal illusions instantly. Base Cost: 6 (emotional).

### 3.6.2 The Dark Libram of Necromancy

One the secretive Golden Dawn's Lorebooks, the Libram is described as "the darkest of the three *Books of Set*" (hinting at Egyptian origins), and is said to drive men mad. The heavy, gnarled binding is rumored to be made of either human or dragon skin, while the writing is tiny and crabbed, seeming to crawl across the page. Note that most uses of most of the powers described by this book are regarded as dubious at best by other sorcerers, including Templar warriors.

The effects it grants are as follows:

*Animation of the Dead*: This temporarily transforms a dead body of any kind into an undead creature, with physical attributes broadly equal to those of the being when it was alive, and IQ 5 or as in life, whichever is *less*. The sorcerer must then win a quick contest between his own Will and the average of the animated creature's HT and IQ; if successful, the creature serves him for the duration of the spell; if not, roll its reaction to the sorcerer at -2. Base Cost: 8 (spiritual).

*Speaker to the Dead*: This enables the caster to speak with a dead body; the deceased's spirit can communicate as when it was alive (and has the same motivations, with the addition of any natural reactions to being killed and then forced to communicate). Spirits are generally highly evasive on the subject of the afterlife, if any. Base Cost: 10 (spiritual).

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*Draining of Another's Life Force:* This causes damage (in the form of reduced vitality) by necromantic assault; thus, it disregards armor (but not Toughness). Base Cost: 16 (spiritual).

*Banish to Eternal Rest:* This effect negates other necromantic magic, and so dispels or blocks other effects based on the Libram or similar forms of magic. Base Cost: 8 (spiritual).

### 3.6.3 LeRoeun's Scrolls of Dimensional Movement

This book is said to be merely the first of "The Writings of Unknowable Knowledge." It was obtained by the Illuminati through obscure research, and all their copies actually consist of thin, flexible sheets of gray metal; they may once have been true scrolls, but all are now bound between covers of the same material.

Several of the effects it provides allow the caster to open *Portals* that transcend distance and dimension: *To Other Lands on the Same World* (Base Cost: 6, spiritual), *To the Faerie Realm* (Base Cost: 8, spiritual), or *To Dimensions Beyond the Faerie Veil* (Base Cost: 10, spiritual). In addition, *Astral Movement* allows the caster to project consciousness (but not the physical body) to other points on the same world. (Note, incidentally, that being able to reach somewhere, and knowing what one will find on arrival, are not the same thing.)

### 3.6.4 The Libram of Mystic Transformation

It is said that the lore in this book was learned by "Osman the Prophet" at the feet of the Djinn Suliem, and passed by him to the Templars during the Crusades. Certainly, its traditional form — fourteen very ornate and gilded scrolls — is kept in a brass-bound chest covered in florid Arabic script, and copies are held by some Ottoman sorcerous factions as well as the modern Templars.

It enables expert readers to achieve a range of related effects, some of which may be combined to create fully effective spells:

*Changing Size:* This is the power of changing a living thing's size anywhere between those of an ant and an elephant. ST and both base and current Hit Point values change in proportion. Base Cost: 12 (material).

*Shape of a Known Form:* This enables the caster to change a living thing into the shape of any other living thing which the caster has personally encountered and spent at least a few minutes observing. The subject's size cannot be changed significantly by this spell, and the shape does *not* grant any significant special abilities. Base Cost: 6 (material).

*Invest With Powers of a Known Forms:* Often combined with the preceding effect, this gives the subject powers or abilities of a specific living thing, which again must be something the caster has studied. It is also possible to grant "inappropriate" abilities, such as making a horse bark like a dog or granting a human being the speed of a greyhound. Base Cost: 12 (material).

*Shape of the Unknown Form:* This harder effect allows one to change a living thing into a shape with which the caster is unfamiliar, although the caster will still need a very detailed verbal description or an accurate picture of the "target" form. Base Cost: 16 (material).

*Transformation Barrier:* This counter–spell effect enables the user to negate or block any of the above transformations, so long as it is cast before the transformation actually takes place. Base Cost: 8 (material).

### 3.6.5 The Libram of Summonation

Another Lorebook trawled from the dark by–ways of scholarship by the Golden Dawn, this is correctly named *The Libram of Metaphysick and Transferences of Corum the Adept*, and is said to date to 109 B.C.; the usual binding for copies of this large work is again rumored to be dragon–skin, with bronze clasps and vellum pages. The Illuminati and others may have had access to copies in the past, but knowing such magick is not something of which many sorcerers boast.

The book deals with the deals with the calling of things and beings through space and other worlds, and even through time. It describes just two, albeit very versatile, effects:

*Summonation:* This is, simply, the power of magically bringing items or entities to one's presence. Objects, weapons, hordes of beings, and supernatural entities may all be summoned for the duration of the spell, but living beings do *not* automatically serve the caster; note that whatever is summoned is the spell's subject for Definition purposes. Base Cost: 8 (spiritual).

*Banishment:* This is the opposite of the above effect; if the subject is a summoned thing or being, it is instantly returned from whence it came. Base Cost: 6 (spiritual).

### 3.6.6 The Libram of Temporal Control

The knowledge in this "book" is associated with the otherwise–obscure "Xerxes of Thrace" and supposedly dated to 1088, although given the powers it describes, its origins are dubious, in time as well as space. The originally, faithfully reproduced (as closely as possible) in all the Temple of Ra's libraries, actually consists of a set of loosely–bound sheets of many different types; writing paper, parchment, calfskin, an oddly slippery stuff with silvery lettering, a few wax tablets, and one sheet of thin slate, all piled into a metal box marked *Imperial Star Fleet Ration Pack*.

It provides three spell effects:

*Time Cessation:* This causes time to stop in the Defined area around the caster, but not for the caster himself. The caster cannot directly harm time–stopped beings or things while the spell lasts, but can move them around, set up traps or attacks, study them closely, or simply flee; the effect ends if the caster leaves its area. Base Cost: 10 (spiritual).

*Time Acceleration/Slowing:* This spell causes the caster to move faster or slower than his surroundings, by a factor of four; thus, in game terms, the caster can take four rounds to everyone else's one, or one to their four. (Sorcerers may choose to slow themselves down for long periods to, for example, reduce their food and air requirements while trapped in a sealed room.)

In game terms, relatively faster characters being attacked by those who are relatively slower gain +4 active defenses vs. melee attacks, +3 vs. arrows and similar projectiles, and +2 vs. bullets and beams. (They can dodge the aiming–point and make themselves hard to hit, even if they cannot see and evade the attack itself.) Opponents who they attack in melee

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have –1 to active defenses, and of course the higher speed permits multiple attacks, All–Out Attacks followed by defenses, more aiming with missiles, and so on. Base Cost: 12 (spiritual).

*Temporal Fugue:* This is the only form of reliable magickal time travel currently known in New Europa. The caster repeatedly shifts backwards in time by up to one minute (but never more), and can do this up to four times, so that up to five "copies" of himself exist and can perform useful tasks simultaneously. (Note that any sorcerer seeing a future version of himself suffering life–threatening injuries may well have to make a Fright Check, and the universe may well deal with minor paradoxes arising from this spell in weirdly unpleasant ways; the effect *can* be used in combat, but many adepts prefer to refrain.) Base Cost: 12 (spiritual).

### 3.6.7 The Manuscript of Elemental Shaping

One of the few written compilations of lore that the Druidic Temple has actually valued and kept in its hands, this book was compiled in 122 B.C. from otherwise–lost Roman sources and Druidic chants heard by its doubtless–courageous author. (Some garbled sources say 1225 A.D., but this seems to be totally incorrect.) It now always takes the form of seven sheets of beaten silver with raised Celtic characters, wrapped in gray calfskin and tied with silver cords.

It deals with the magickal manipulation of the classical four elements. Note that they do not have to be "pure" ("earth" includes dirt, soil, sand and rock, water may be salty, and air or water includes fog), but they must be the sort of thing that an ordinary person would call fire, water, earth or air (so oils and strong acids are not "water"). Each of its four chapters deals with a different effect:

*Investing the Element:* This is the technique of creating creatures of fire, water, earth or air; it is therefore sometimes thought of as a form of summoning. The creatures it shapes have an extremely limited form of intelligence and basic senses, and can be required to perform one simple task or a series of very simple tasks. Base Cost: 10 (elemental).

*Elemental Temperature:* This enables the caster to change the temperature of a quantity of any one element (i.e. non–living matter only) roughly between the freezing and boiling points of water. The process is restricted in power, and cannot be used even indirectly to do much more damage than can be caused by contact with scalding water (though that may be enough); fire can be reduced to cold smoke (but *not* made super–hot); water can be frozen, or boiled like the contents of a kettle over a hot fire; earth can be transformed to permafrost or something like desert sands; air can be made like a desert wind, or reduced to an icy, ground–hugging fog. Base Cost: 4 (elemental).

*Shaping the Element:* This allows the sorcerer to manipulate the gross form of any of the four elements (though not to change their quantity). Air can be made into whirlwinds, fog or cloud can be moved around, water can become a whirlpool or caused to flood an area, and earth or fire can be caused to form barriers and more complex shapes. Shaped elemental matter cannot move fast enough to inflict impact damage, but may crush or force back by sheer weight as well as restrain, and of course, shaped fir

e can burn. Base Cost: 8 (elemental).

*Elemental Barrier:* This counter–magick enables the caster to stop any of the above magickal effects dead within its area of effect. Elemental creatures vanish; temperatures and shapes return to normal in a turn or two. Base Cost: 8 (elemental).

### 3.6.8 The Manuscript of Paranormal Divination

One of the White Lodge's Lorebooks, this is usually identified by scholars with the obscure lore alluded to in the writings of the shadowy "Jarix the Red Mage." Despite its title, copies are written in tiny gold symbols on black onyx tablets. It deals with the ancient topics of divination and magickal perception, and provides four effects:

*Clairaudience:* This is the power to listen to conversations and other sounds at a distance. Base Cost: 6 (spiritual).

*Clairvoyance:* This is the power to both see and hear people and events at a distance. Base Cost: 8 (spiritual).

*Scrying:* This is actually functionally identical to *Clairvoyance*, but the caster must make use of a clear crystal or mirror. Base Cost: 6 (spiritual).

*Divination Barrier:* Cast over an area, this effect prevents any of the previous three powers (or similar magical observation effects) penetrating that area for its duration. Base Cost: 8 (spiritual).

### 3.6.9 The Manuscriptum Mentalis

Written by Trigmeistus Adeptus of Austria in 1215, this text has become closely associated with the history of the Illuminati. Master copies consist of a series of sheets, originally from a scroll, now always loosely bound in black leather, the cover being embellished with gold and the text being heavily embellished with illuminated lettering and runes.

The wide range of effects it teaches, all concerned with the mental control of others through redefinition of thought—structures, are as follows:

*Mental Command:* This allows the sorcerer to issue simple or complex mental commands to others, which they must obey. (Lengthy tasks may permit one or more Will rolls after a while, to break the control, at the GM's option; commands that directly violate the subject's deeply-held beliefs or fundamental personality, as defined by character Disadvantages, may increase the required casting cost by around half the points value of the Disadvantage, again if the GM so chooses.) Base Cost: 4 (emotional).

*Dominate Will:* This is the power to suppress the subject's conscious will completely and take direct control of his body. The caster can do nothing but Concentrate so long as control is maintained. Prolonged control (over a period of a day or more), or acts *violently* opposed to the subject's fundamental nature, may allow the subject to "awaken" enough to attempt a quick contest of Wills to regain control. Base Cost: 10 (emotional).

*Forget:* This is the power to make the subject forget all about a particular subject or period of time. Base Cost: 4 (emotional).

*Implanting Suggestions:* This allows thoughts or ideas to be placed "in the back of the subject's mind." (Note that, used subtly, this can be extremely powerful, but attempting to plant thoughts which the subject would never normally even consider will lead the subject merely to shake his head and mutter at himself not to be stupid.) Base Cost: 6 (emotional).

*Entrancing and Beguiling:* This effect renders the subject dizzy and confused; effectively, Mentally Stunned. If it is cast



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for an extended duration, the stunning effect returns every turn, and the subject must make repeated IQ rolls to achieve anything. Base Cost: 4 (emotional).

*Stunning:* This effect renders the subject unconscious by mental assault. Treat it as doing damage, but it ignores armor, and the damage is taken from Fatigue rather than Hit Points; in addition, the subject is Stunned by the attack. Base Cost: 10 (emotional).

*Create Blinding Pain:* This does no actual damage, but incapacitates the subject through pain for its duration. The victim must make a Will roll at  $-5$  (or  $-1$  if the victim has High Pain Threshold) every turn on which he wishes to do anything but lie on the ground and moan, and even if successful all actions are at  $-2$  to all rolls. Base Cost: 12 (emotional).

*Death Wish:* This is a mental assault so powerful and insidious it causes physical injury, as the subject's mind causes his body to shut down. (Victims appear to suffer heart attacks, cerebral hemorrhages, etc.) Treat it as a damage-producing spell; it ignores armor and even Toughness, but the victim may attempt a Will roll on each turn of the attack, and the damage caused is reduced by the amount by which the roll was made, to a maximum of  $-3$ . Base Cost: 16 (emotional).

*Mental Barrier:* This effect negates or deflects all of the above effects instantly. (It may also block similar mind-affecting magicks, at the GM's option.) Base Cost: 8 (emotional).

### 3.6.10 The Manuscriptum Universal Alchemic

The only *complete* surviving work of Hermes Trismegistus, fabled founder of alchemy, this slim text is regarded as a classic of magickal theory by those who have seen it. The Freemasons always give copies a silver cover and gray paper, with tiny silver writing. Early Moslem alchemists knew and admired the work of Hermes Trismegistus, and clearly had access to this book; some Ottoman wizards still employ similar spells. The effects it describes are as follows:

*Universal Alchemic:* This effect changes the material composition of non-living objects for the duration of the spell, transforming (for example) lead temporarily to gold. (The Freemasons, being a high-minded society who tend to protect the *status quo*, disapprove of those who apply this effect to fraudulent ends without good reason; also, the GM may introduce various magickal and practical tests for authenticity which can fairly easily be applied by those who deal in precious metals and the like.) Base Cost: 8 (material).

*Flesh to Mineral/Mineral to Flesh:* This effect transforms living flesh to a specific mineral, or vice-versa, for the duration of the spell. Castings should be Defined as if they were to inflict damage; DR reduces the "damage" done, and a victim reduced to 0 Hit Points is transformed. Base Cost: 8 (material).

*Alchemic Destruction:* This effect causes living matter to be reduced to "lower" alchemical forms — usually meaning a bubbling puddle of slime. In game terms, it is used to inflict direct damage. Armor worn by the subject protects against this attack, but Toughness and living things' innate DR does not. Base Cost: 16 (material).

*Alchemic Barrier:* This effect enables the caster to block or cancel any of the above changes, provided that this spell is cast before the transformation begins. Base Cost: 8 (material).

### 3.6.11 Megron's Realm of Dreaming

Supposedly written by "Megron the Sumerian," this work is certainly of Middle Eastern origin, but a number of Moslem groups have decided, at various times, that it is blasphemous or objectionable, and have sought out copies and destroyed them; none are currently locatable in the Ottoman Empire. The White Lodge, however, makes full use of it, but keeps it very secure. It is *rumored* to consist of a glowing roll of multiple vellum sheets, and to be the second and only surviving part of a collection known as *The Three Realms of the Heart*, "the foundation of the Knowledge of the Old Kingdoms." Its effects consist of dreams that may be sent to its subject:

*Dreams of Prophecy:* These are dreams in which the caster sends knowledge. Base Cost: 6 (emotional).

*Dreams of Warning:* These are dreams in which the caster sends warnings of some forthcoming threat. (These have less detail than *Dreams of Prophecy*, but always convey an intense sense of danger.) Base Cost: 4 (emotional).

*Nightmares:* When these are sent, the caster defines some story or scene for the subject to experience (usually strongly unpleasant); the subject's mind then places the person or thing the subject fears most in crucial positions in the dream. For the duration of the spell definition, the subject only recovers Fatigue half as quickly as normal, and a night more than a quarter spent in Nightmares does *not* count as a full night's sleep. If the subject later encounters element from the Nightmare in the waking world, this may be worth a Fright Check, at the GM's option. Base Cost: 8 (emotional).

*Erotic Dreams:* When these are sent, the caster defines an appealing story or scene with erotic elements (usually explicit, but sometimes more subtle); the subject's mind then places the person the subject truly desires most in crucial positions in the dream. The effects of this on the subject are left to the GM's judgement and careful roleplaying; the results can include a very pleasant night's sleep, an intense sense of guilt at dreaming thus of someone socially inappropriate, a growing obsession with making the dream come true, or a tendency to extreme confusion and distraction in the presence of the one desired. Sleep spent thus usually enables the subject to recover Fatigue normally, unless the caster suggests an especially wild or extraordinary dream. Base Cost: 6 (emotional).

*Killing Dreams:* These are dreams in which the dreamer experiences his own death, with horrific clarity and realism, and cannot awake by himself. Each minute that the dream continues, the subject must roll against HT, at -1 for every full ten minutes for which they have been dreaming; if the roll is failed, they suffer Fatigue loss equal to the amount by which the roll was failed, and when Fatigue reaches 0, they start losing Hit Points (due to heart failure and nervous shock). It is perfectly possible for the subject of this spell to die in their sleep, without a mark on them; it will usually be fairly clear to observers that they are suffering bad dreams, but not necessarily quite how bad; if they are woken, the spell is broken, though if the waking is rough or they have started taking actual damage, a Fright Check may be appropriate. Base Cost: 16 (emotional).

*Dream Barrier:* This effect makes the subject immune to all the above magickal dreams for its duration (though it does not prevent normal dreaming). Base Cost: 8 (emotional).

### 3.6.12 On the Raised Forces of Nature

This privately-published modern study by Sir Richard Burton has quickly become a favored teaching tool for the Druidic Temple, although the techniques it describes are still passed on in purely oral teachings among more traditionalist

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Druids; Burton simply collated facts about many spells that they and similar elemental magicians and shamans have long employed. It takes the form of a set of four plain, if substantial, leather-bound volumes that would attract no attention in any bookshop.

The effects it describes are varied and dramatic (and most of them can be used to inflict damage, at least in some circumstances):

*Raise the Storm* enables the caster to create thunderstorms or hurl rain or lightning at opponents. Base Cost: 6 (elemental).

*Raise the Maelstrom* creates tidal waves, floods, or even violent jets of water. Base Cost: 8 (elemental).

*Shake the Earth* creates earthquakes of various sizes and intensities. Base Cost: 8 (elemental).

*Raise the Firestorm* causes large or small conflagrations, or can be focussed to a blast of flame. Base Cost: 8 (elemental).

Lastly, *Quell Nature* enables the caster to suppress the power of storm, flood, earthquake or flame (magickal or natural); when dealing with forces powerful enough to cause direct physical injury, the Definitions must include a cost equal to that of causing comparable damage. Base Cost: 8 (elemental).

### 3.6.13 Osman's Tome of Physical Movement

Moslem scholars claim that "Suliem the Djinn" taught "Osman" the spells in this book, in order that human sorcerers should be enabled to achieve certain feats without perpetually harassing his kind for aid. However, there are only a few copies now to be found in the Middle East; like Osman's *Libram of Mystic Transformation*, it is most heavily used by the Templars. Master copies usually take the form of silver-filigreed scrolls, written in Arabic and stored in a heavy iron chest with the triangular "Seal of Osman" on the top. It describes the following effects:

*Hand of Hovering*: This simply enables the caster to hold objects or people at a fixed point up to 100 feet above the ground. Base Cost: 4 (material).

*Floors of Glass*: This lowers the friction between an object or person and a surface on which they are resting to that between perfectly smooth glass surfaces. Living things must usually roll against DX every round (with modifiers at the GM's option) to remain on their feet; objects may be moved around as if they were on a sledge on snow (see p. B89 for rules). Base Cost: 4 (material).

*Mastery of Levitation*: This permits objects or beings to be moved slowly through the air, at up to 2 yards per turn. The caster controls the movement, which is never violent enough to cause impact damage or serious disorientation (though being dropped from a great height if and when the spell ends can be quite damaging). Subjects who can grab a solid object can prevent the spell moving them around, and those with their own flying ability can move normally, albeit at -2 yards per turn if fighting the power of the spell, but neither can actually break the effect until the spell ends. Base Cost: 6 (material).

*Knowledge of Flight*: This permits objects or beings to be moved more rapidly through the air, at up to 6 yards per turn.

The caster may either control the movement himself, or give control to the subject (if they are willing); in the former case, delicate maneuvers may require an IQ roll from the caster; in the latter, the subject can use Flight skill (at default if necessary) as appropriate. Subjects with their own flying ability, or who can grab a solid object, can break free of the effect with a successful quick contest of their ST against the caster's IQ. Flying into solid objects causes normal collision damage; flying under the caster's control can be disorienting, and may require a HT or Acrobatics roll to avoid unpleasant effects. Base Cost: 8 (material).

### 3.6.14 The Realm of the Unknown Mind

Probably a relatively modern compilation, but not much known to scholars outside the Order of St. Boniface, this magical treatise on sanity and madness consists of four volumes, bound in ornately carved brown leather, with red foil titling and a cross in the center of the cover. Bonifacian scholars describe it as "the third of the three *Realms of the Heart*," but the identity of the other two "Realms" is unclear. Incidentally, all or most of the spells it contains are known to Moslem wizards, but no complete copy of the book has ever been located in their lands. The effects are as follows:

*Cast Out the Other* cures what will one day be called schizophrenic behaviors and mental "possession" of various kinds; strictly speaking, the benefits only last for the duration of the spell, but a competent expert (or even a wise amateur) can often stabilize the subject's mind and identify and eliminate the cause of the trouble in the time of respite granted by the spell. Base Cost: 8 (emotional).

*Conquer the Madness* influences more gross forms of insanity, curing or causing them depending on the subject's state beforehand. Subjects may bark like dogs, hallucinate, or simply be rendered catatonic, or be cured of similar conditions for the duration of the spell. Fine control over these effects is hard, and will probably demand use of Psychology skill and careful judgement; this magick does not grant actual comprehension of the intricacies of the human mind. Base Cost: 8 (emotional).

*Hear the Hidden Thoughts* allows the caster to perceive the subject's thought processes, often including matters of which the subject himself is not fully aware. (This can be useful in many ways, but should be played as giving a broad, deep insight into the subject's mind, not usually as quick or simple telepathy.) Base Cost: 6 (emotional).

*Bring to Peace* imparts calmness and tranquility to the subject, who loses all desire for aggressive action. (The subject will still defend himself from attacks perfectly competently, but with regret and minimum force.) Base Cost: 4 (emotional).

*Bring to Rest*: imparts even greater calm, such that the subject will fall into a deep and restful sleep unless the surroundings make that completely impossible. Again, the spell does not make the subject deaf, stupid, or incompetent; merely *strongly* inclined to rest. (An IQ roll may be needed to focus on urgent matters, even those which involve indirect but severe threats of danger.) Base Cost: 6 (emotional).

### 3.6.15 The Ritual Writing of Psychic Binding

Created by the Order of St. Stephen of Malta in 1065 and passed on to their successors in the Holy Order of St. Boniface, the modern edition of this book (a plain gray leather folio, with a silver cross embossed on the cover) is standard in Bonifacian libraries. (One secular Moslem Lorebook contains some very similar spells; the Order of St. Stephen may

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well have drawn on related sources.) It deals with a range of "binding" effects, primarily intended to keep the caster and others safe:

*A Simple Geas* causes the subject always to obey a specific command or word, whenever the caster speaks it to him. Thus, the subject may be required to, say, "Stop" or "Leave this place" whenever the caster chooses to command him. Base Cost: 4 (emotional).

*Restraint Through Magic Circles* makes the subject incapable of crossing a defined, clearly marked circle. Nor can the subject take any direct action to erase the marked circle (although he can try to persuade others to do so). Base Cost: 2 (emotional).

*Restraint Through Magic Wards* makes the subject incapable of passing through a specified doorway. Base Cost: 4 (emotional).

*Restraint Through Magic Talismans* makes the subject incapable of attacking an individual carrying a specially-prepared talisman. (The preparation process need not be complex; marking a simple wooden amulet with a magickal symbol can be enough.) Base Cost: 4 (emotional).

*Strengthen the Life Bond* creates a magickal link between the caster and the subject. If the subject is then reduced to 0 Hit Points or less during the duration of the spell, he will be brought back to 1 Hit Point, one turn later; however, the Hit Points he needs for this will be lost by the caster, in the form of matching injuries. If the subject is ever killed instantly in any way, the link is broken; however, the caster must then roll against HT, and suffers 1d damage if the roll is successful, 3d damage if it is not. Base Cost: 12 (emotional).

*Psychic Bond* creates a mental link between the caster and the subject. For the duration of the spell, the caster can always determine what the subject is physically doing or saying aloud, with one round of concentration. (However, the caster cannot read the subject's thoughts.) Base Cost: 8 (emotional).

*Break the Binding* severs any and all of the above effects instantly. Base Cost: 8 (emotional).

## 3.7 Cantrips and Wards

In addition to the "advanced" rituals contained in various Lorebooks, there are a set of simpler magickal techniques universally taught to student-enchanters; *Cantrips and Wards*. Any character with magickal training should know how to perform such workings, unless they are a complete novice or have received a particularly unusual education; no Unusual Background is required.

### 3.7.1 Cantrips

Cantrips are very minor spells, with no Definitions required when preparing a casting; range, power, etc. are already included in their Base Costs. Likewise, they do not suffer from significant problems with harmonics, even if inappropriate energy is used in casting them. (Cynical sorcerers say that they are mostly used for showing off at high society parties.)

*Sense Magick* enables the caster to tell if magick has been used within 100 feet of his present position in the last 24 hours. This magickal awareness lasts for one minute. Base Cost: 8 (emotional).

*Magelight* is cast on a non-living object, which then radiates a blue glow ("werelight") equivalent to a small candle for the next ten minutes. This provides fairly useful illumination out to about 10 feet. Base Cost: 8 (material).

*Candle Flame* momentarily creates a match-sized flame, usually on the caster's fingertip, convenient for lighting fires and cigarettes. Base Cost: 8 (material).

*Confusion* causes a single subject within 20 feet to be Mentally Stunned. (Mages and subjects with Magic Resistance can roll against IQ to avoid the effect altogether, without even a round of stunning; add Magic Resistance to IQ when rolling to avoid or shrug off the effect.) Base Cost: 10 (emotional).

*Simple Illusion* creates minor, temporary changes of size, shape and color on small objects. It can make a few copper coins look like gold, change the writing on one page of a book, or give the caster a slightly changed face. The GM may require IQ rolls, possibly in a quick contest with observers' IQ, to make some detailed illusions convincing; sorcerers, and any creature with Magic Resistance, see through the illusion on a roll of (IQ+Magery) or (IQ+Magic Resistance). The effect lasts so long as the caster is conscious, within 10' of the illusion, and not casting any other magick. Base Cost: 9 (emotional).

*Minor Telekinesis* allows the caster to levitate up to one ounce of material, and move the target at up to 3 yards per turn. The effect may be used for small manipulations such as undoing a button, but this requires an IQ roll; on a failure, the cantrip ends and the caster is Mentally Stunned. Base Cost: 10 (material).

*Sense Illusion* allows the caster to know that *something* in his range of perceptions isn't real, but not what. The special awareness lasts for one minute. Base Cost: 8 (emotional).

*Resistance to Sorcery* gives the caster extra resistance to any magick of which he is the subject. It increases such spells' Thaumic Energy Requirement by 4 + (twice the cantrip caster's Magery). Base Cost: 10 (spiritual).

*Housewifery* is a common spell that will clean or perform very minor repairs on objects such as fabrics, pots, or household implements. It will clean about a square yard, or repair objects of up to three pounds weight; it cannot give a knife more than a blunt, poor edge, or repair any complex mechanism that the caster does not fully understand. (It is used to save time, but is never much use in combat and cannot replace skills.) The caster must touch the thing to be cleaned or fixed. Base Cost: 9 (material).

Three other cantrips are mostly limited to the Arabian world, but may occasionally be known to sorcerers of other traditions:

*Create Coffee* does not, strictly speaking, *create* the beverage, as the caster must know the exact location of suitable coffee beans, water, sugar, and cups or glasses, and must be within twenty feet of these components; the spell then instantly combines and transforms them into up to six small cups of perfect Turkish coffee. Base Cost: 8 (material).

*Flare* creates an instantaneous flash of light and cloud of smoke, about seven feet high, within six feet of the caster. This

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is not powerful enough to cause harm, or even to dazzle, but it *can* startle. Furthermore, a quick caster may be able to duck unnoticed through a nearby doorway or behind cover at the moment of the flash (roll a contest of Stealth vs. the observers' IQ). Base Cost: 9 (elemental).

*Sinister Aspect* makes the caster briefly more impressive, purely in a frightening or disconcerting way; their face seems darkened by shadows, their stare seems to pierce to the very soul of whoever meets it, and their voice becomes sibilant and heavy with obscure menace. This is worth +1 or +2 to reaction rolls, but only for purposes that can be served by worrying people, or frightening them into submission; the effect lasts for about ten seconds. Base Cost: 8 (emotional).

### 3.7.2 Wards

Wards are magickal measures designed to protect a sorcerer's home or camp from attack. There are two types:

*Lesser Wards* provide warnings. Once they have been created, the caster will become aware (through a psychic link) any time that a spell or magickal effect crosses or impinges on a defined, enclosed perimeter. Their Thaumic Energy Requirement is based solely on the Duration Costs given below, but the caster must walk the entire length of the perimeter immediately before casting them.

*Greater Wards* act to weaken or negate other magick; they impose a *multiplier* on the cost of any magick that attempts to pass through them. (Note that this makes it *extremely* difficult to cast spells over broad areas including the homes of a few competent magicians.) They can only protect a single contiguous structure or clearly-defined location (such as a building or cave); the cost of the casting is the sum of the Duration and Multiplier Costs given below:

#### Ward Duration Costs:

For each Hour (up to 23): 1 energy.

For each Day (up to 29): 5 energy.

For each Month (up to 12): 10 energy.

#### Ward Multiplier Costs:

x2: 2 energy.

x3: 6 energy.

x4: 10 energy.

Wards can be created using energy of any aspect, and hence do not suffer from harmonics. Multiple Greater Wards cannot be cast on the same area, or one inside the other; the more powerful simply takes precedence. Greater Wards do *not* increase the cost of Lesser Wards cast by the same sorcerer; indeed, sorcerers' homes often have both in place.

## 3.8 Variations

Magick is a rich, complex, and incompletely-understood topic in New Europa, and even the most hard-headed sorcerers secretly suspect and hope that there is some secret or obscure novelty out there somewhere, for them to discover and turn the whole field around. (Relatively nice wizards want to improve the world; most would like to become famous; some would like the power to blast their enemies clear out of their reality.) The following are just some of the better-known peculiarities of the Art.

### 3.8.1 Other Spellbooks

The list of Lorebooks above is by no means exclusive; minor and non-European Orders such as those mentioned in the sidebars on pp. 00–00 all have their own Lore, of course, and there are always "lost," hidden, and variant texts (of *very* variable quality). *The Book of Sigils* and *Comme Il Faut* (from R.Talsorian Games) describe more spellbooks, and GMs are always free to have new volumes discovered in the course of the game. But remember; such a discovery will be immensely exciting for all sorcerers, and will lead to danger as agents of every magickal faction vie for control of the new work; it will represent a major campaign topic, in other words.

There are two other things to remember here. Firstly, although the vast majority of self-proclaimed Orders have at least one Lorebook (it being a matter of self-respect and credibility not to make the claim otherwise), a few manage without. A powerful magical artifact is enough for some, although that sort of resource is vanishingly rare. And second, some "primitive" Orders especially have "Lorebooks" that lack paper, or words, or both; for example, the "Spirit Quiver" of the Great Pipestone Lodge (in the

Native American twenty Nations) is a bundle of arrows, with spell-lore inscribed along their shafts, while the "Spirit Bells" of the loosely-organized Path of the Spirit World (in Africa) are a collection of fetishes of bone, stone, and animal parts, loosely bound together; when they are suspended in a breeze, the bearer can hear the voices of the gods, instructing him in magic. For a magician of another tradition to learn anything from such sources would require a great deal of work and application of some specialized skills.

### 3.8.2 Constructing Spells

GMs wishing to define new spell effects for a game should use existing descriptions as a template, especially with regard to required energy types and costs. In general, effects should be broad and fairly vaguely stated, able to be adapted for a range of effects by their users, but some, especially in the lore of minor Orders, can be more specific and narrow. A typical fairly "broad" effect might create ice out of thin air; a "narrow" version could be a spell that can produce icicle darts for use as weapons.

*Characters* seeking to create or research new spells should have a major task on their hands, and a number of adventures to play through. Note, incidentally, that the boundary between invention and discovery is shadowy; many New European sorcerers subscribe to the theory that "Ancient Civilizations" knew considerably more about magick than their modern descendents, and hold that everything one could want in the way of magick is to be found in dusty texts somewhere, while others adopt a more scientific, modernistic approach (though sorcerers are always a little more subjective and intuitive than true scientists). In general, most research sorcerers mix the two approaches in various proportions,



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searching through old texts for hints of possibilities, then attempting to give the ideas they find a coherent theoretical underpinning. In all cases, in game terms, a large number of skill rolls will be required; Thaumatology skill is usually the most important, but archaic languages, Archaeology, History, Anthropology and Mathematics can all easily be required — not to mention Research and any number of social and adventuring skills when the time comes to go looking for material.

One final *optional* possibility with regard to spells; completely specified spells can be treated as Maneuvers (see p. CI162–164), based off the character's skill with the relevant Lorebook. They should be considered Hard, and can be bought up to (Lorebook skill+4). This may unbalance the game, leading to wizards who are tiresomely good at throwing one type of fireball, but even New European sorcerers *may* be able to profit from intensive specialized practice; it's simply that the wiser ones prefer to remain as flexible generalists.

### 3.8.3 Magickal Artefacts

"Magick items" are rare, but not unknown, in New Europa. They take many forms, with various capabilities, but the most *relatively* common type is an object which, when used in rituals, lowers the energy required to work the spell. In game terms, this type of "Artefact" usually provides a certain number of points of energy of a particular aspect, available whenever the Artefact is employed in the course of a ritual casting. A *very* few Artefacts provide energy with more than one aspect, or "unaligned" energy that is equally useful for any casting.

(Other magickal devices may have specific powers of their own, equivalent to specific spells. A few such do exist, but they are very rare; sorcerous Orders and national governments may fight small but vicious wars for possession of them. They are slightly more common in the Middle East, though flying carpets are not quite as frequent a sight over Arabian as westerners like to think.)

#### 3.8.3.1 Creating Artefacts

An Artefact can only be created through Intent and Use; the more it is employed for its intended purpose, the more powerful it becomes. It is impossible to just *make* an Artefact; rather, a ritual item, used repeatedly, accumulates power and develops magickal potency. This means that most Artefacts are old tools and possessions of magickal groups (some of them long-dead and half-forgotten). It also means that the most powerful Artefacts are very old, well-worn, and often fragile.

In fact, for every year in which it is used at least three times for ritual castings, a potential Artefact — an object that was specifically made and dedicated to magickal use — gains approximately *one hundredth of a point* of power. Thus, even the most trivial Artefacts have been in continuous ceremonial use for at least a century, and the real prizes are millennia old. In other words, PCs cannot create Artefacts for themselves; at best, they can hope to locate such things. The problem there is, of course, that any hint of an Artefact will bring at least three rival expeditions onto the scene.

By convention, Artefacts are described in terms of their **Appearance**, the **Secret Knowledge and History** associated with them, and their **Aspect and Thaumic Power**. A couple of examples:

### 3.8.3.2 The Avenger's Blade

*Appearance:* A medieval broadsword with a cross hilt, plain at first glance but actually with intricate inscriptions and symbols etched along its blade.

*Secret Knowledge and History:* Originally employed as a focus of knightly dedication in Templar ceremonies, the Blade has been lost and rediscovered several times over the centuries, and has not always been recognized by its owners. The Templars probably want it returned, although they would surely ask politely and openly. It is *not* intended to be wielded in combat; rather, the wielder should use it while preparing himself for a quest, or to aid travel.

*Power and Aspect:* 6, Material ("Six of Diamonds").

### 3.8.3.3 The Numeric Eye of Avogadro

*Appearance:* A large triangular pendant, with a sun shape superimposed. In the center is a carved sapphire eye with a flickering light within.

*Secret Knowledge and History:* A powerful Artefact of uncertain origin, rumored to have been used by the Master Sorcerers of the Tibetan Plateau and later recovered by Sir Richard Burton from agents of the Dragon Empire. The origins of the name given to it in the West lie in obscure by-ways of confused scholarship; its powers over the Realms of the Mind are legendary.

*Power and Aspect:* 15, Emotional ("Ace of Hearts").

## 3.9 Engine Magick

Engine Magick is the rarest of all powers in New Europa, and the key to the Second Compact's hopes. On the borderline between science and sorcery, it demonstrates what was previously considered impossible; the creation of etheric knots by purely mechanical means, without the intervention of a conscious, trained mind. *The Lost Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*, published by R.Talsorian Games, describes a large number of Sorcerous Engines; others are certainly possible, but should always be rare — indeed, most are one of a kind. In game terms, these are the ultimate in plot devices.

They are also infernally hard to build. The designs derive from the work of one universe or another's version of Leonardo da Vinci (see p. 00), and the underlying ideas demand unorthodox genius and insight. They also require exceptional technical skill to build, which in New Europa almost invariably means that dwarfish craftsmanship is involved, but they must then be calibrated by a skilled sorcerer; as dwarfs are universally blind to magickal energies, this means that the project must always be a collaboration. And lastly, certain small but crucial components must always be made of "Star Iron" — pure meteoric iron, rare in any world and the subject of special concern in New Europa, where its traditional use has been in weapons that can inflict True Death on faeries. Distinguishing Star Iron from the normal material itself requires sorcery. (Or an expendable faerie . . . But that is a joke that the faeries themselves do not find at all funny.) Fortunately, the results can justify all this work. So far, knowledge of Engine construction is limited to agents of the Bavarian crown and their armed forces and dwarf allies, who have kept their new and pressing need for Star Iron a state secret, but the essential ideas are spreading.

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### 3.9.0.1 Construction and Use

In effect, given an external source of power, each Engine casts a specific spell. (GMs can use the Lorebooks described above as a guide to what is possible, or invent completely new effects.) The power source can be entirely mundane, and indeed should *not* be magickal; intricate clockworks, compressed air systems, steam engines, electric motors, or good old-fashioned hand-cranked are all possible. One thing to note is that an Engine's effect starts within a few minutes of its being activated (though there is often a delay while it gathers enough Thaumic Energy for it to function), continues for as long as it is kept in motion, and stops as soon as it is cut off; a reliable power supply is highly desirable.

The mechanism of the Engine itself will usually appear like some incomprehensible and faintly demented work of engineering. Again, each is unique, but for a general idea, Engines that produce *emotional* effects often consist of spinning concentric metal rings, the outermost embellished with hooks and small cups; those that produce *material* effects tend to be a mass of gears, joints, pulleys and wires, moving in repeating patterns; Engines that manipulate *spiritual* energies almost always incorporate polished metal globes and extremely eccentric pendulums and balance beams; and those used for *elemental* effects mostly have heavy, jointed metal components driving long screws and cogwheels.

Although Sorcerous Engines seem to defy many "known laws of the universe," they are not entirely irrational. If nothing else, at least "bigger" does seem to equate to "more powerful." A toy-sized Engine may have a range of 50', and effect small objects or a few square feet; one the size of a desk would have a range rather less than a mile, or effect wagon-sized objects or crowds of people; something the size of a locomotive could project its effects hundreds of miles, or effect whole city blocks; and hypo

thetical engines capable of world-spanning, city-moving effects would have to be the size of ocean-going ships. (They would also require several pounds of Star Iron, whereas a small engine can be built with a few ounces.) But the power of any engine is startling in one respect; it seems to more or less ignore Magick Resistance, which makes the whole subject rather unnerving for faeries, dwarfs, and dragons.

Engines may also annoy sorcerers, as they draw fairly large quantities of energy from their surroundings for as long as they are in use, then release it when they cease functioning. (If they have been moved in the meantime, this can actually leave one area temporarily drained of energy, and another "overloaded." Note that it is impossible to hide the activation of a Sorcerous Engine from sorcerers in the vicinity; it will appear to their awareness like a grossly powerful spell-casting.) They are somewhat susceptible to harmonics and "runaway" effects, but good engineering usually reduces this problem — some of the time, at least.

### 3.9.0.2 Engine Magick and Aerial Vehicles

Some Sorcerous Engines are installed in large vehicles, notably the "Aerovettes" of the Bayernese Aerial Navy and the "Aeroliners" of the same country's new commercial air fleet. Even these are rare, secret, and experimental enough that they should be treated as plot devices rather than standard mechanical systems, but if anyone insists on attempting to build these craft using the *GURPS Vehicles* system, the following guidelines may be appropriate:

First, they use lighter-than-air technology (*not* magick) for lift. (This is no great secret, although many members of the public are confused on the matter.) The gasbags are a very sophisticated dwarfish construction, which can be treated as

TL7; although they use hydrogen for lift, they are also impressively resistant to fire (+4 to rolls when checking after damage has been taken).

The actual Sorcerous Engine is treated as a combined power plant and propulsion system. Its weight (in pounds) is equal to  $(20 \times kW) + 200$  (divide by 50 to find volume in cf), and it burns *no* fuel; multiply the output by 4 to find the thrust in pounds. Cost is largely an irrelevance, as this is a very special design and needs a certain amount of rare Star Iron, but if anyone insists, base it on \$10 per pound of weight.

However, the Sorcerous Engine requires a certain amount of external power to start it up and keep it operating, which is provided by a dwarf-built steam engine; treat this as a late TL5 Triple-Expansion design, whose output must be equal to 2% of that of the Sorcerous Engine. Startup time for the Sorcerous Engine is 3d minutes, but of course the steam engine must be running first.

Lastly, the rest of the design can be fairly straightforward, though dwarfish ingenuity may mean that some components are effectively TL6 or even better. Some craft, used by the Bayernese Secret Service, use extensive mechanical automation; this permits multiple systems to be assigned to one crew station (as in TL6+ designs).

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In the world of *Castle Falkenstein*, magick (as "magic" is usually spelled there) is a potent force, widespread but still rather enigmatic — perhaps comparable to nuclear physics in our world, in a way. It is controlled by complex and subtle techniques — *rituals* — which the expert must study intensively and employ with care and determination.

New European sorcerers say that they perceive magickal energies as a web of etheric forces underlying reality; with training, they can "reach out" and manipulate this web, temporarily tying the strands into new forms; hence, spells are sometimes jocularly referred to as "etheric knots." However, the energy involved is as much a turbulent flow as a web, making the business highly unpredictable at times. This chapter deals with the way this is represented in the game.

### 4.1 How Magick Works

Ironically enough, thoughtful sorcerers will say that creating a magickal effect is actually very easy; it is usually accomplished with a few words and a brief gesture. The hard work of magick lies in mustering and controlling the energy that all such effects require.

This sort of magick requires a great deal of energy; more than can be safely or repeatedly drawn from a sorcerer's own body. Fortunately, there is plenty of such "Thaumic Energy" freely available, flowing through the "luminiferous ether" that fills the universe. Rituals enable the user to control of such of this energy as is useful for a given purpose. However, the flows of Thaumic Energy are chaotic and almost entirely unpredictable; even the most powerful sorcerer cannot always be sure that a ritual will be either safe or reliable.

#### 4.1.0.1 Study Requirements

The Magery advantage is not an absolute requirement for the use of *Falkenstein* magick, but it is a large advantage. It should be noted, incidentally, that characters seem to be either born with Magery or not, but if they are this lucky, they can, given hard experience and insight, train it to higher levels (in game terms, by spending experience points); characters who do not start with Magery, on the other hand, can rarely if ever gain it in play. (GMs must give explicit permission for the first level of Magery to be bought with experience after character creation, are always entitled to refuse, and should probably only allow it if the character has gone through some kind of radical supernatural experience.)

Characters without Magery can learn the Ritual Magic skill (see p. CI144) which is the basis of this magick system, but they always use it at -5. In addition, no character can learn this skill to higher than (10 + twice their Magery level). GMs may also refuse to let characters start with more than Magery 1, so players of magick-wielding characters will have to spend much of their experience on magick if they want to advance in the art — it is a full-time vocation for the dedicated. (Note, incidentally, that Magery does **not** give a bonus to the skill.)

Every magick-worker has a particular style of magick, almost always that of the "Sorcerous Order" in which he or she trained; this is the mandatory specialization for the Ritual Magic skill. (Knowing more than one style is extremely rare, and mentally stressful, as it is hard to prevent the two styles intermingling disastrously as one works magick — it may demand an Unusual Background.) This also dictates the style of ritual (see below) used in the character's magickal activities.

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### 4.1.0.2 Lorebooks

Finally, the student of magick must be acquainted with one or more *Lorebooks*. Each Sorcerous Order has a small library of Lorebooks, which its members may study freely; study of any Lorebook beyond those of a single Order involves gaining access to other Orders' libraries, either freely granted or (much harder) by stealth or guile.

In game terms, study of each and every Lorebook beyond those of one's own starting Order is a 5–point Unusual Background, which may be purchased with experience in play, but *only* if the character has somehow managed to gain access to the relevant book for a period of days or weeks at minimum — the exact time required is left to the GM, and should be much longer if the study is intermittent or did not involve the aid of someone who already understood the Lorebook. Most starting characters should *not* possess knowledge beyond that of their own first Order, and GMs should feel free to impose social problems on PCs displaying too much versatility in front of other sorcerers.

(Unless they are well–known to have gained the favor of the second Order legitimately, its members may accuse them of theft, while their own Order may suspect them of disloyalty. While great sorcerers are often members of several Orders, even "allied" factions have rivalries and mutual suspicions, and regard their Lore as private knowledge and the secret of their power. Also, adapting another Order's rituals to one's own style can be made as hard as the GM wishes, especially if the Orders represent very different magickal traditions; the trick may involve a lot of work and several successful Thaumatology rolls.)

Each Lorebook is treated as a Mental/Very Hard skill. Each such skill has Ritual Magic skill as a prerequisite, and cannot be improved above the level of Ritual Magic itself. It has a default of Ritual Magic–5, but *only* for books which the character has studied. Note, incidentally, that even if and when the character gains access to another Order's library, this skill must usually be raised above default levels to be useful. In addition, there are a small number of minor Cantrips and Wards (see p. 00), which every trainee sorcerer learns; these are cast using Ritual Magic skill itself.

*Example: Miss Daphne Barnes–Wight is a young member of the Druidic Temple just beginning her training. She has Magery 1, and first learns Ritual Magic (Druidic) to level 12, its maximum until she can improve her Magery through hard experience and practice. She is now quite adept in the performance of druidic ceremonies, and can also cast cantrips and wards with a skill of 12. Her training also included some brief glimpses of the Temple's two Lorebooks, the Manuscript of Elemental Shaping and B*

*urton's On the Raised Forces of Nature, in which she therefore gains a default skill of 7. Moving on to study these volumes, she can raise her skill in them as high as 12, which will make her a competent druidic sorceress.*

### 4.1.1 Shaping Spells

Actually working useful magick involves taking the generalized knowledge from a Lorebook and using it to shape a specific effect. Each Lorebook has a set of effects listed, each of which in turn has an *Aspect* and a *Thaumic Energy Requirement*.

A spell's Aspect is the broad type of magick it represents, and hence the type of energy it requires. There are four such Aspects; in past *Castle Falkenstein* publications, they have been related to the four suits of a deck of cards, and so, for ease of cross–referencing, these correspondences are noted here. First, *Emotional and Mental* magicks ("hearts") involve

the mind and will, and encompass mind control, telepathy, and illusions. Second, *Material* magicks ("diamonds") involve the manipulation and transformation of solid matter. Third, *Elemental* magicks ("clubs") involve forces and phenomena, and also the conjuration of quasi-sentient beings associated with them; this is the magick of fire, weather control, earthquakes, and the traditional four elements. Lastly, *Spiritual* magicks ("spades") are the most uncanny, involving ghosts and demons (or at least beings that *appear* to be such things), and also extra-dimensional travel and astral projection.

In addition, the power of a spell is measured by its Thaumic Energy Requirement (abbreviated "TER" for game purposes). The values listed in the description of each Lorebook are the **base** cost of a spell based on the effects; giving it range and broader scope or area, and making it effect a living being, increase the cost for any spell quite considerably.

*Example: Miss Barnes–Wight has advanced her knowledge a little, raising her skill with Burton's On the Raised Forces of Nature to 11, but now she has taken a brief holiday. Unfortunately, through a chain of accidents, she finds herself being pursued through a mountain pass by a gang of brigands. Glancing at the slopes above her, she sees a chance to delay them; if she can cast the effect known as "Shake the Earth" before they catch up with her, she can surely start a landslide that will block their passage. This is Elemental magick, but how much energy will it demand?*

#### 4.1.1.1 Thaumic Energy Definitions

The details which increase a specific spell's TER are known as its *Definitions*. They are calculated as follows:

##### **Duration:**

(How long the magickal phenomenon will last.)

Effect will be of momentary duration only: +1.

Effect will endure 1–30 minutes: +2.

Effect will endure up to 1 hour: +3.

Effect will endure up to 1 day: +4.

Effect will endure up to 1 week: +6.

Effect will endure up to 1 month: +7.

Effect will endure up to 1 year: +8.

##### **Elements:**

(Elements are how many *different* effects the spell will produce; a spell whose effects have to move around counts as having one more element, unless it is specifically one that grants or changes a being's power of motion. Tasks are the number of different actions that the victim of a summoning mind control or similar spell will have to perform; for



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example, "Stop what you are doing" or "Close the door" are each one task. The GM is the final judge as to what is or is not "complex.")

Spell involves one element: +1.

Spell involves 2–3 elements: +2.

Spell involves 4–5 elements: +3.

Spell involves 6+ elements, or involves complex elements : +4.

Subject must perform one Task: +5.

Subject must perform multiple Tasks: +6.

### **Range:**

Effect will be delivered by touch: +1.

Range of effect is anywhere within unaided sight: +2.

Range of effect is anywhere within a few miles: +3.

Target of effect is in another city: +4.

Target of effect is in another country: +5.

Target of effect is in another dimension: +6.

Target of effect is in another time: +6.

### **Numbers/Area Affected:**

Spell will affect 1 being, or 5 square feet: +1.

Spell will affect up to 10 beings, or 10 square feet: +2.

Spell will affect up to 100 beings, or 100 square feet: +3.

Spell will affect up to 1000 beings, or 1000 square feet: +4.

Spell will affect an area the size of a country: +5.

### **Type of Subject:**

(The type of creature or thing to be affected by a spell, if any, influences its energy cost. When multiple beings are being targeted, use the cost for the most expensive of them. Note that faeries usually have +1 Magic Resistance, dragons and demons usually have several levels of it and Magery as well, and dwarfs have downright excessive levels. Spells with effects such as clairvoyance do not generally have a "Subject," although GMs may apply Magic Resistance modifiers if characters try to spy closely on

highly resistant beings.)

Subject is a thinking being or animal: +1.

Subject has Magery: +2.

Subject has Magic Resistance: +(level of Resistance).

Subject is an ordinary inanimate object: +1.

Subject is a magickal or Cold Iron object: +6.

### **Familiarity**

(When aiming spells at a sentient being, *personal* familiarity with the subject helps a great deal. Close friends are "Well Known" to you, and casters are treated as knowing themselves well; a few casual meetings makes someone "Barely Known.")

Caster knows Subject well: +1

Caster barely knows Subject: +2.

Caster has only just encountered the Subject: +3.

Caster has never even seen the Subject: +4.

### **Damage to be Inflicted**

(This applies only to spells which can be formulated to inflict damage, of course. These can usually be cast at low levels that cause no actual damage, if desired; this represents twinges of annoying but not devastating pain, flashes of flame that might light dry tinder but will not harm anyone directly, and so on.)

Spell is to inflict 1d–3 damage: 0.

Spell is to inflict 1d damage: +2.

Spell is to inflict 2d damage: +4.

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Spell is to inflict 3d damage: +8.

Spell is to inflict 4d damage: +12.

Spell is to inflict 5d damage: +16.

Spell is to inflict 6d damage: +20.

Spell is to inflict cutting damage: +4.

Spell is to inflict impaling damage: +8.

To find the spell's total TER, sum the base cost and Definitions, then subtract HALF the caster's Ritual Magic skill (rounded down); more skilled sorcerers are notably more efficient in their castings.

*Example: "Shake the Earth" has a base cost of 8. Miss Barnes–Wight sees that the rocks she wishes to bring down are precariously balanced; a momentary shaking should do it (+1), and this is an uncomplicated matter (one element, +1). She hardly wishes to be touching the rocks when they fall, so a range of Unaided Sight will be required (+2), and bringing down the rocks at a key point on the slope will mean shaking up some 10 square feet (+2). Rocks are inanimate objects, not living things (+1); familiarity costs therefore do not apply, and as she does not wish to damage them directly, merely set them in motion, neither do damage modifiers. The total so far is 15, but subtracting half her Ritual Magic skill of 12 brings this down to 9.*

*Alternatively, if Miss Barnes–Wight wished to hurl a blast of flame to inflict a couple of dice of damage on the leader of the brigands, the calculation would go: 8 (base cost of "Raise the Firestorm") + 1 (momentary) + 1 (single element) + 2 (sight range) + 1 (1 being) + 1 (animate subject) + 3 (only recently encountered subject) + 4 (2d damage) – 6 (half Ritual Magic skill), for a total of 15. Given the severe difficulty of casting magick in combat, the landslide seems a better idea.*

### 4.1.2 Casting Rituals

Having Defined the desired result, the sorcerer must begin the ritual which gathers the energy. The exact form this takes varies from Order to Order (see the sidebar, p. 00), but as a general rule, it requires hands and feet free, the ability to speak, and an extended continuous period of concentration. Sorcerers cannot communicate useful information while casting; if they are hurt, forced to use an active defense, or otherwise distracted while performing a ritual, they must make a (Will–3) roll to continue, with minuses for hit points of damage suffered as usual. (On a failure, all energy gathered so far is lost.)

If the final total TER for the desired spell is zero (as is possible for minor effects cast by skilled sorcerers), the ritual takes only 1d turns. Otherwise, after every two minutes of game time while continuing to perform the ritual, make a roll against the character's skill with the relevant Lorebook. For every three full rolls made — i.e. for every six full minutes the ritual has been conducted — there is a penalty of –1 to the skill. The results of the roll are as follows:

If the roll is a critical success, or was made by 4 or more, the sorcerer can gather 2d+1 points of correctly–aspected

energy.

If the roll was a normal success made by 3 or less, the sorcerer can only obtain incorrectly–aspected energy. This may be discarded, or it may be kept, counting as 1d–3 points towards the energy required, with a minimum of 1; however, whenever such inappropriate energy is used, it generates a *harmonic* in the completed spell (see below).

If the roll was a normal failure, but was missed by 4 or less, the sorcerer can only obtain 1 point of incorrectly–aspected energy. Again, this can be discarded or retained but with a harmonic side–effect in the spell.

If the roll was missed by 5 or more, or was a critical failure, the result is a *Wild Spell* (see below).

Once the sorcerer has acquired sufficient energy, he can cast the spell, taking a single turn. (The energy can be held for a while, but the sorcerer must continue to concentrate to do so, and can only move one yard per turn.) Note that, if the spell's Definitions were determined incorrectly — if, for example, the target had some kind of unknown Magic Resistance, raising the actual cost of the spell — and if the energy gathered was not actually sufficient, the spell simply fails, with a few embarrassing flashes and sparks. Spells in this system are not usually Resisted (more difficult targets simply increase the energy requirement), but some kind of roll may be required in a few cases, at the GM's option; more usually, however, a successful spell takes full effect instantly and with no further trouble.

#### 4.1.2.1 Collaborative Casting

A group of sorcerers using similar ritual styles (which usually means that they must be trained by the same Order) may work together to cast larger or faster spells. After every two minutes of their collaborative ritual, *each* of them makes a skill roll and may gather Thaumatic Energy if successful. However, only the highest Ritual Magic skill is used when calculating the spell's total TER.

*Example: If Miss Barnes–Wight was aided by a fellow Druid with Ritual Magic skill of less than 12, her spell would still require 9 points of energy, but both of them would be able to roll against their respective skills every two minutes, and combine the energy thus acquired. A friend trained by the Illuminati, on the other hand, would be no use whatsoever.*

Note that adding low–skilled sorcerers to a group casting may increase its power, but also dramatically increases the risk of a Wild Spell. Large–scale magick is always best left to the experts.

#### 4.1.2.2 Effects of Harmonics

When a sorcerer uses incorrectly–aspected energy in a casting, the spell behave strangely, even madly, gaining a "flavor" from one aspect of the inappropriate energy. GMs may choose something appropriate, or roll at random from among the other aspects. To play fair, sorcerers will usually know what sort of energy–flow they are tapping, and spells *usually* only display one harmonic effect (reflecting the aspect of the most powerful surge of energy used), so players should be warned broadly what sort of thing they may expect; sorcerers who are also born gamblers have even been known to play with harmonics, seeking to achieve useful or interesting subsidiary effects with their spells. Harmonics are rarely directly lethal (although nothing is ever certain in sorcery), but can be deceptive and disturbing.

A spell with *Mental* harmonics usually gains an emotional aspect; auras of fear or desire surround their operation, or the

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subjects suffers hallucinations or strange temporary obsessions, or elemental forces may display an unpredictable intelligence.

A spell with *Material* harmonics will develop solidly physical manifestations; spiritual beings may materialize, dimensional travel spells may open up temporary gates, illusions may become real, mental restraints may appear as physical chains, and elemental effects tend to be amplified and exaggerated, often very dangerously.

*Spiritual* harmonics tend to be especially disturbing; ghosts, demons, and mythological creatures may materialize, bystanders may suffer glimpses of other realms of existence, or mundane objects may seem somehow haunted for a while.

Lastly, *Elemental* harmonics tend to the violent, often taking the form of extreme weather conditions or earthquakes. Spiritual beings appear amongst thunder and lightning, mind–controlling magick is accompanied by flickering lights or ominous fogs, and so on.

### 4.1.2.3 Wild Spells

When a spell "runs wild," it slips beyond the caster's control as chaotic Thaumic Energy pours into the material world. The results will follow the general shape of the caster's intentions, but will usually far exceed them; a flame blast may engulf the whole area, while an attempt at mind control may induce strange impulses across an entire town. The GM has complete freedom to decide these effects; it is generally considered unfair to have the spell inflict more than a point or two of damage on the caster *directly*, but the indirect effects can be quite dangerous, so long as characters have a fair chance to evade them. If the spell is being cast under very carefully controlled conditions (as when a sorcerer is performing cautious laboratory research), it *may* be possible to damp or redirect the worst of the effects with a roll of (Ritual Magic–3), but this is obviously not reliable, and the problem one reason why sorcerers tend to do their most dramatic work some way away from habitation.

*Example: Miss Barnes–Wight believes that she is at least five minutes ahead of the brigands, so she begins to chant her druidic invocations. After two minutes, her player rolls against her skill of 11; the dice come up 12, a near–miss. The GM announces that the ritual has tapped a flow of Materially–aspected energy; Miss Barnes–Wight, murmuring "needs must," retains the single useful point (despite the danger of extra Material phenomena in the midst of a landslide) and continues. After another two minutes, her player rolls again; a 6, enough to obtain useful energies! Rolling 2d+1, however, she is less fortunate, obtaining only 5 more points of energy -- still not enough.*

*Miss Barnes–Wight could resort to Unraveling herself (see the sidebar, p. 00), but that is a dangerous option in the midst of hostile wilderness, and she suffers from Overconfidence, so she continues. After another two minutes, as the bandits gallop into view, her player rolls again, with a –1 penalty, so the effective skill is now 10 -- which is unfortunate, as the dice come up 15. Never mind the harmonics she was prepared to accept; Miss Barnes–Wight has created a Wild Spell, and the entire mountainside explodes in a fury of tumbling rock. The leading three bandits are swept away, but now, Miss Barnes–Wight has greater worries, as the rocks bear down on her . . .*

#### 4.1.2.4 Canceling and Dispelling Magick

Spells do not continue forever, but eventually fall apart under the stress of the universe's Thaumic Energy flows. These forces also makes it quite easy for the caster to cancel any spell before it is due to end (unless it is running Wild or involves especially confusing harmonics); 1d–2 turns (minimum 1) of minor ritual activity is enough, with no roll required.

For another sorcerer to dismantle a spell is harder, and often dangerous. The sorcerer making the attempt must start performing an appropriate ritual; after 1d turns, the caster will become aware of the attempt (all spell–casters having a minor mental link to any of their spells which are currently operating), and may either permit the spell to be cancelled (requiring only a successful Ritual Magic roll from the sorcerer making the attempt), or (if in a position to do such a thing) start a reinforcing ritual of his own to prevent it.

In the latter case, make a Quick Contest between the Ritual Magic skill of the sorcerer attempting to dispel the magick and the appropriate Lorebook skill of the caster. If the dispelling character wins by 2 or less, the spell continues at much–reduced power; halve all numeric values associated with it (area of effect, damage done, etc.). If the dispelling character wins the contest by 3 or more, the spell is completely eliminated. However, if one character rolls a critical failure while the other rolls a success, or an ordinary failure while the other rolls a critical success, not only does the spell continue or end as above; the loser suffers an energy backlash that inflicts damage equal to half the spell's Thaumic Energy. (Needless to say, dismantling another sorcerer's spells without permission is Considered, to say the least, provocative.)

Spells with harmonics may be harder for the caster to dispel, depending on the specific effects and at the GM's option; for example, a Will roll may be needed to disregard the ghostly voices produced by a Spiritual harmonic. Wild spells are *extremely* difficult to cancel in this way; treat them as resisting any attempts (including their own caster) with a "skill" of 18, and three successes are required, each in turn progressively reducing the power of the spell proportionately; each attempt carries the full risk of a dangerous backlash for the dispelling character, with the spell treated as having 6 more points of Thaumic Energy than its original definition.

## 4.2 Dueling in Magick

There is, in fact, one way of inflicting rapid damage by the use of magick, but ironically enough, it only works against other magick–workers. In fact, it tends to take the somewhat formal shape of "Sorcerers' Duels."

Quite why sorcerers should be able to inflict damage on each other by sheer force of will is a matter of some technical debate. Perhaps the process of mastering Ritual Magick strips away a layer of protection from the soul, enabling the sorcerer to sense (and thus usefully manipulate) magickal energies, but also leaving them as vulnerable as a snail that has emerged from its shell to explore the world. Perhaps dueling sorcerers actually cause each other's magickal powers to run amok, damaging the victim from within. Perhaps all magickal training is subtly designed to permit the high adepts of the art to discipline their students better. It is probably all a matter of perspective, but whatever the case, only characters with Magery and at least half a point spent on Ritual Magick skill can engage in this form of combat.

In addition, only two characters can be involved in a duel, and to begin the combat, their gazes must meet and briefly lock. This means that many such duels are matters of formal agreement; to *force* another sorcerer to duel requires

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trickery or cleverness. If two characters are face to face and one wishes to lock gazes with the other, who is unsuspecting, the aggressor must make an IQ roll at  $-2$ , with standard modifiers for range; if the victim suspects what is being attempted, but cannot look away altogether, this usually means that the other must win a quick contest of Wills, then make an IQ roll at  $-3$  with range modifiers. Other modifiers for circumstances are at the GM's option.

Once the duel has been initiated, it continues until ended by mutual agreement (many duels of honor are only fought until one participant takes damage), the unconsciousness or death of one participant, or something distracting *both* participants so that they fail (Will $-2$ ) rolls. (Distracting only one of them hands an advantage to the other.) It consists of a series of mental stabs and blocks, while both participants remain stationary and concentrate on the duel. Characters with Magery may sense the localized blaze of magickal forces; other observers will merely sense a subtle crackling in the air. From the point of view of the participants, the duel involves a storm of intangible energies, minor illusions, and bizarre sensory effects.

Each turn, each character may select one of the following options:

A *Normal Attack* is rolled on (IQ+Magery), and permits the attacker to make standard Will roll in defense on the same turn. On all subsequent turns, all rolls in the duel are at a cumulative  $-1$  penalty.

A *Furious Attack* is rolled on (IQ+Magery+3), but permits *no* defense roll on the same turn, and again gives a cumulative  $-1$  penalty to rolls on subsequent turns.

A *Determined Defense* gives a (Will+3) roll in defense, and permits no attacks on the same turn. On a successful Will roll, the character can also eliminate one accumulated  $-1$  penalty on subsequent rounds, or all such penalties if the Will roll is a critical success.

A *Recovery* permits only a (Will $-2$ ) roll in defense, and no attacks, but automatically eliminates all accumulated penalties to rolls.

If a character is distracted, or deliberately breaks from the duel to take a turn of other actions, they take all actions at  $-3$  on that turn (re-focussing from the ether to the physical world), and can make no defense or attack rolls; nor do they eliminate any accumulated penalties.

If an attack encounters no defense, it is a simple roll. On a success by 2 or less, the victim is forced to *Retreat*; on a success by 3 or more, the victim suffers *Minor Damage*; on a critical success, the victim suffers *Severe Damage*. (These terms are explained below.)

If an attack meets a defense, make a Quick Contest between the two rolls. If the defender succeeds and the attacker suffers a critical failure, no damage is suffered and the attacker can only use a Determined Defense or Recovery next turn. If both fail or the defender wins, there is no other effect. If the attacker succeeds and the defender rolls a critical failure, the defender suffers *Severe Damage*. Otherwise, if the attacker wins by 3 or less, the victim is forced to *Retreat*; if the attacker wins by 4 or more, or rolled a critical success, the victim suffers *Severe Damage*.

The meaning of these results are as follows:

*Retreat* means that the defender must move one yard away from the attacker. If this is impossible or the defender refuses, they suffer 1d–3 damage (minimum 1 point). Pre–arranged sorcerous duels are traditionally fought in large enclosed rooms; either party can retreat safely for some time, but not forever.

*Minor Damage* is 1d–2 points of injury (minimum 1 point).

*Major Damage* is injury equal to 1d + the attacker's Magery level.

Damage in Sorcerers' duels ignores all toughness and DR; it takes the form of nervous shock, minor internal bleeding, and suchlike. Victims suffer the usual penalties to rolls (including duel attacks and defenses) on their next turn (but not on the turn in which it is suffered). Note that it is impossible to continue attacking an unconscious opponent; a sorcerer's mind must be conscious to be assaulted. Finishing off a downed opponent with a mundane weapon is, of course, the act of a base villain.

### 4.3 Sorcerous Orders

As should be clear by now, the Sorcerous Orders are the key to magick in the *Castle Falkenstein* world. (Knowing how to perform *any* magick without some kind of past or present membership of an Order would be at least a 20–point Unusual Background.) Orders vary greatly in style and philosophy, but also have a great deal in common; each is a mixture of academic college, private club, religious society, and secret conspiracy, in varying proportions.

Each has a greater or lesser interest in recruiting members, and most have a policy of active searching; the talent (Magery) is rare enough that promising youths are rarely ignored. Of course, sometimes, the Order which finds a potential student subsequently discovers that he or she is temperamentally unsuited to their world–view, or has some twist to his or her talent that would fit better elsewhere; most understand this, study their new recruits carefully, and pass promising talents on to more suitable

Orders with which they are on tolerably friendly terms— preferably before they have been required to make any of the oaths of loyalty and high principle that all Orders require, or permitted sight of any secret knowledge.

Recruits almost invariably spend some years as *Novices*, in which time the younger among them who have not already received whatever their society would consider a fair level of education may well spend much of their time in mundane schooling. Novices also often have the traditional apprentice duties of fetching, carrying and cleaning up for their teachers; in *GURPS* terms, they have a large (if not usually dangerous) Duty, and being only part–trained at best, are not generally suited as adventuring PCs. (Very rare characters receiving an accelerated education in sorcery may pass through this phase more quickly, but may then emerge with dangerous gaps in their knowledge.) The next level of standing in an Order, once a character has displayed tolerable competence in rituals and knowledge of the range of the lore, is usually known as *Journeyman*; this is the status of the competent workaday sorcerer, able to work independently and entitled to a vote in the Order's councils, but not considered exceptional in the magickal world.

Higher levels of competence attract titles such as "Master" and "Grand Master," and a great deal of respect, at least within one's Order — and also corresponding Duties, such as teaching Novices, administering chapterhouses, and hunting down renegades. In game terms, Masters are powerful characters, with not only high skills and magickal advantages but also Status, Administrative Rank, and Allies. Some are crankish, reclusive scholars, others are among the



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movers and shapers of New Europa, and it is not always easy to determine which are which.

Members of all but the most secretive Orders possess a badge, sigil, or blazon, which they may wear in public if they choose. In fact, most Orders expect their members to do so regularly, and expect the same of other Orders as a courtesy. Hiding one's status is seen as eccentric, and one should not be ashamed of one's allegiances; this is a matter of pride and loyalty, something like a priest's garb or a soldier's uniform (or an old school tie). Of course, it can also mark one out for one's enemies, but sorcerers are assumed to be intelligent enough to be able to deal with that.

### 4.3.0.1 Chapterhouses

Obviously, magickal Orders need somewhere to meet. While druids, say, may be happiest working their magick in secret, hidden groves, even they tend to appreciate a roof over their heads when planning mundane business these days. A single sorcerer will operate out of his home, but in any city where an Order has a significant membership, it may well also have its own "chapterhouse" — a combined library, office, laboratory, meeting-room and clubhouse, complete with accommodation for visitors and guests. Chapterhouses are often protected by law and custom, or at least the reputation of sorcery in general; even in lands where policemen need no warrant to enter private property, they tend to be careful of meddling in the affairs of wizards.

Although few Orders are hierarchical enough to have a "world headquarters," most have their centers of power and influence, and some chapterhouses are especially noted. The Bavarian Illuminati naturally have a substantial house in München, while others of a more or less worldly bent favor London, Paris, Berlin, or Vienna, and those most dedicated to the "restoration" of ancient Egyptian knowledge are forever seeking to strengthen their presence in Cairo.

### 4.3.1 Relations Between Orders

In private, many sorcerers will admit that another justification for the existence of Sorcerous Orders is to keep their members from each other's throats. Sorcerers tend to be strong-minded, opinionated folk, and sometimes need the protection, security, and restraint provided by a group. Which is not to say that Orders are always friendly to each other; on the contrary, they are often strenuously at odds. But being established, public groups, they have to be formal about it.

In fact, all "overt" Orders are required, as a matter of courtesy, to offer hospitality and (when necessary) sanctuary to each other's members. The former can vary immensely, from comfortable rooms and full board in a chapterhouse to a heap of straw over the stables (the latter being, of course, a blatant, heavy-handed snub unless the house is extremely short of space and facilities). Hospitality can be refused to sworn enemies, and excuses can be made (one does not question a gentleman who says that his rooms are all full, and who points one to another Order's chapterhouse across town), but it is considered unwise to stretch the point; questions will be asked in wizardly society, and negative Reputations can rapidly be gained.

The "Law of Sanctuary" goes back to witch-hunting times, which are not perhaps entirely departed in some parts of the world. In essence, a sorcerer must offer shelter and protection to any other sorcerer who is being pursued by civil authorities. This can obviously lead to some difficult situations, and does not prevent the host asking the visitor some pointed questions as to *why* he is being pursued, and again, the principle can be stretched and bent a great deal; but casting a brother-sorcerer to the mercies of the mob is generally seen as a vile way to behave.

All of which said, and whatever politeness is enforced in towns and social gatherings, when members of the White Lodge and the Temple of Ra come face-to-face on a country road at night (or when almost anyone else encounters members of the Golden Dawn about their usual tricks), unpleasantness often ensues.

### 4.3.2 Magick in Society

The Orders also shape the way in which magick is perceived by the populace at large. Given the raw power of this art and science, and some of its past abuses, non-magickal folk may be forgiven for being a little nervous of the subject. The Orders provide tacit reassurance; they are known to have their own rules and codes, and to discipline members and sometimes hunt down renegades, which ordinary human beings admit to themselves is better than having scores of unpredictable wizards doing as they please. Even the more sinister Orders are generally quite open about their existence, although some minor groups prefer to remain obscure; if forced to speak of themselves, they try to laugh off the worst rumors (which *are* often ludicrously exaggerated), and present themselves as mildly eccentric scholar-philosophers.

Actually, even the benevolent groups are a great deal more than that. Power is always a temptation, even for those who avoid actual corruption, and sorcerers are no less interested in politics and particular causes than anyone else. (Philosophers of all people have an interest in the way the world works.) However, for the most part, sorcerers do keep magick to themselves — though as people, they are as likely to be seen out in society as anyone else.

In fact, magick grants something of an entree to many social events; a sorcerer of even quite lowly origins makes an interesting party guest, and the structure of the Orders actually encourages a fair degree of sociability, both internally and externally. (In *GURPS* terms, many sorcerers are Status 1 or better.) Although it remains enigmatic and even worrying to non-participants, magick is a recognized and established part of the *Castle Falkenstein* world.

Naturally, this sometimes means that other folk sometimes seek to employ sorcerers for their skills; and while Orders often have substantial investments and landholdings, and some sorcerers are either independently wealthy or in some kind of permanent employment, others are happy to earn an honest (or, less often, spectacularly dishonest) crust from their Art. Because sorcerers are generally treated as gentlefolk, they tend to adopt the same sort of manners as "consulting detectives" or English barristers, accepting a fee (or "gift") at some point after a case is complete rather than coming cap-in-hand like a tradesman; of course, it also means that their fees tend to be substantial. PCs seeking to hire a sorcerer should make polite inquiries at chapterhouses and also around private clubs and social gatherings, rather than consulting the classified advertisements, and should expect to have to pay well.

### 4.3.3 Game Considerations

Membership in an Order can be reflected in various ways in *GURPS* terms, in addition to the magickal powers and skills it teaches. To begin with, all Orders expect certain oaths of loyalty (or at least, informal but *very* strong promises of allegiance) from their members. These can be treated as a Duty (with strength and frequency varying according to the Order and the character's specific position in it), a Sense of Duty, or in the case of Orders with a particularly complex ethical code, a Vow. Members of a few Orders with a strong religious component to their beliefs may have Disciplines of Faith (or even Fanaticism); some especially crankish factions may actually impose significant Delusions on their trainees. In some cases, Orders acquire a Reputation (good or bad) that applies to all their members, though most try to avoid this situation, which is a nuisance at best, a danger at worst. Enemies (usually members of rival Orders) are *not* mandatory except for certain dark cults.

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On the positive side, an Order can easily represent a Patron, or provide Allies, Ally Groups, or Contacts; again, details vary between individuals as well as between Orders. What is universal is that all acknowledged members of overt Orders have a Claim to Hospitality, worth 8 points. This represents more or less guaranteed hospitality from one's own Order, without too many questions being likely, and rather less certain and sometimes grudging aid from other Orders (with no guaranteed reaction bonus), who are nonetheless very helpful in that they are so widespread. It also covers the Law of Sanctuary, which is again unreliable but sometimes crucial to survival.

Of course, one can always simply take one's old Order as an Enemy, and a negative Reputation among almost all sorcerers as an outcast. This is not conducive to survival, however.

### 4.3.3.1 Membership in Multiple Orders

It should also be clear that any sorcerous character seeking to expand the variety of spells that he or she can cast (and not wishing to live *very* dangerously) must acquire at least associate membership in more than one Order. This is possible, if not always easy.

The problem is that all Orders guard their lore jealously, regarding it as the basis for their strength and the justification for their existence. Many suspect each other of engaging in underhand tactics to acquire knowledge; they are not always incorrect. They also all know that each of them imposes oaths and duties on members. Even "friendly" Orders have their differences of opinion and philosophy, and are cautious of each other. Thus, anyone applying for membership of a second Order is suspected, however politely, of being a spy and an infiltrator.

Convincing another Order of one's good faith is thus a difficult task, usually requiring extensive use of social skills. Occasionally, honorary or associate membership is granted as a reward for services rendered, but membership granted as an honor may not entitle the recipient much use of the Order's Lorebooks; in fact, sometimes the honor consists of study of a single spell (or merely free access to the dining room in a chapterhouse).

And anyone granted fully useful membership of an Order will naturally be expected to take and honor its membership oath. This can present a great deal of difficulty to an honorable Victorian gentleman–sorcerer, as it is quite possible for loyalties, and even the specific terms of each oath, to clash. There are stories of sorcerers entitled to wear a dozen or a score of sigils, but it is safe to assume that they were people of truly remarkable moral flexibility (to put it politely). Holding several different memberships is not, in fact, something of which it is wise to boast; it may well earn one a negative Reputation among other sorcerers.

All of which said, we may now consider some of the major Orders to which characters may belong.

### 4.3.4 The Illuminated Brotherhood of Bayern

The early "Illuminati" were sorcerous adepts of 15th–century Europe, who were linked to the Freemasons and Rosicrucians of the time and dedicated to promoting intellectual enlightenment. However, the current Order was established in Bayern in 1776. It is dedicated to spreading mastery of magick, and enlightened social and governmental principles. Because it often does this by means of secretive manipulation, it has been suppressed through much of its history, even, until recently, in Bayern itself. (Membership no longer *has* to be a Secret, but some members may prefer to remain hidden.) It frequently clashes with the more selfish manipulators of the Golden Dawn, and has aligned itself with

the Second Compact.

Its symbol is the Eye in the Pyramid, and members wear rings with this symbol on their right hands (and long gray robes with the same symbol during high ceremonies); it claims that its lore derives from the Egyptian and Mesopotamian temples. It has fewer overt chapterhouses than its size and power might imply, as members often meet in private clubs or their own homes; many are scholars at major universities.

The Brotherhood's libraries hold copies of *The Manuscriptum Mentallis* (p. 00) and *LeRoeun's Scrolls of Dimensional Movement* (p. 00).

### 4.3.5 The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn

In other universes, the Golden Dawn was a late 19th-century creation that attracted a number of intellectuals and artists with an interest in magical mysticism, along with the notorious Aleister Crowley; in New Europa, it appears to have authentic ancient roots in the cult of Isis, and genuine magickal power based on the works of Hermes Trismegistus and Egyptian and Celtic knowledge. Although it has become an overt society with a veneer of respectability, its members are generally dedicated to the pursuit of power, worldly as well as magickal; although they clash most often with the Illuminati, no other Orders entirely trust them. (Membership is occasionally a Secret; Megalomania is not actually *mandatory*.)

Its symbol is a stylized ram and crescent motif, usually worn on some small item of jewelry. It maintains a network of hidden temples as well as chapterhouses, especially in England, Wales, and Prussia, and its members wear black robes marked with red mystical symbols for its often dubious ceremonies.

Its known Lorebooks include *The Dark Libram of Necromancy* (p. 00) and *The Libram of Summonation* (p. 00), which should give some hint as to its style.

### 4.3.6 The Grand Order of the Freemasonic Lodge

Like the Golden Dawn, the Freemasons of New Europa live up to some of the wilder claims made for their counterparts in other universes. Dedicated to charity and good works, they wield magick supposedly based on the heritage of Hiram of Tyre, builder of Solomon's temple, but also involving Egyptian, Christian, and Sufi mystical ideas. It is old enough that it can claim to be the "parent" of more than one other major Order. Its ideals are based on the image of a stonemasons' craft lodge as the symbol of brotherhood between all men, and its ideals have led it to align itself with the Second Compact. ("Virtuous" Disadvantages such as Code of Honor are fairly common, though only a very few members are starry-eyed idealists.)

The branch of the Freemasons active in the U.S.A. resembles its European parent to a casual glance, but has in fact developed into a manipulative political organization. Having contributed a large number of the Founding Fathers, the Freemasons were in a position to direct much of the original policy of the nation, and they unfortunately succumbed to the temptations of power; among other things, they have dictated the laws that require that all magick (other than their own) must be licensed and controlled, and they are even said to ensure that the president is always loyal to themselves. (In game terms, members often have many useful Allies and Contacts.) They remain an all-male group, whereas the Old World portion now accepts female members; in fact, relations between Masonic groups on either side of the Atlantean

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Ocean are increasingly strained.

The Freemasons' symbols are based on the craft they revere; the square, compass, plumbline and level, which symbols are often worn on small items of jewelry. (The Eye in the Pyramid, originally theirs, is now largely left to the Illuminati; the traditional leather aprons are worn for formal ceremonies.) Their unostentatious "Temples" may be found almost anywhere in the world: their standard Lorebooks are *The Manuscriptum Universal Alchemic* and *Agrivicca Rexus' Realm of Illusion*.

### 4.3.7 The Order of the Temple of Jerusalem

Descended from the crusading Knights Templar, this Order now draws on magickal lore derived from Middle Eastern sources. (There is some suggestion that they were predecessors to the original Freemasons.) The New European Templars re-emerged some time after they were supposedly obliterated in 1307; they seem to have survived for a time in Scotland, where they remain strong. The Templars now form the most military and combative of major Orders, and their willingness to adventure has carried them to America as well as across the Old World. Their membership remains entirely male, and largely consists of soldiers and sailors; the Order displays a violent hatred of any group that practices human or even animal sacrifice or the summoning of evil spirits (to the point of Fanaticism), and expresses it with fire and the sword.

This approach has led the Templars to align themselves with the Second Compact, albeit somewhat on their own terms. Their symbol is well known to be a red cross, worn in various forms, including on white tunics for formal ceremonies. Their Lorebooks are *The Libram of Mystic Transformation* and *Osman's Tome of Physical Movement*.

### 4.3.8 The Mystic Lodge of the Temple of Ra

A relatively recent foundation that, however, embodies the mystical Victorian obsession with all things Ancient Egyptian, the Temple of Ra is an all-male group whose members believe themselves to be reincarnations of ancient pharaohs. As such, they are often obsessed with the idea that they are destined to rule the world. Despite their taste for archaic symbolism (including Egyptian-style dress for private ceremonies), they are happy to use technology as well as magick, and produce some of the most bizarre arch-villains of the *Falkestein* world, although the Order as whole remains just barely respectable. Members may have significant Delusions, Obsessions, or even Megalomania; they have a running feud with the White Lodge, who despise technology in all its forms (and who are personal Enemies to some of the Temple of Ra).

Their chapterhouses are described as "temples," but give as much space to laboratories as to ceremonial areas; the largest are in France and Prussia. Their chief symbol is the ankh; their only Lorebook is the bizarre *Libram of Temporal Control*.

### 4.3.9 The Theosophic Masters of the White Lodge

Members of the White Lodge claim to be the earthly agents of beings called the *Mahatmas*. Once the dominant power on Earth, ruling from the lost continents of Lemuria and Mu, the Mahatmas have now become ethereal, and seek to guide humanity to a state of higher consciousness. Their teachings actually appear to mingle Cabalism, Buddhism, Taoism, and eccentric sorcerous theories, along with a call for humanity to turn away from technology and embrace a life of simple meditation. The Lodge often sabotages new technological accomplishments and seeks to subvert significant individuals

through the use of dream–magick; thus, it often comes into conflict with technologically–oriented groups, including the Temple of Ra. Its secrecy is patchy at best, but its members are mostly regarded as relatively controllable lunatics — except by some, who fear that the "Mahatmas" are really Unseelie, or *something else*.

The sigil of the White Lodge is the symbol for infinity, worn on a pendant or ring or as a tattoo (usually somewhere under the hairline). This symbol, in blue, also marks the hoods of their white ceremonial robes. Small, private White Lodge chapterhouses are scattered across Europe; they seem to be especially strong in Vienna. Members may be too secretive to benefit from a Claim to Hospitality beyond the Order (reducing that Advantage to 5 points, and optionally adding membership as a Secret), and often display Delusions or Fanaticism.

Lorebooks known to be possessed by the Lodge are *Megron's Realm of Dreaming* and *The Manuscript of Paranormal Divination*.

#### 4.3.10 The Holy Order of St. Boniface

Confronted with the undeniable power of sorcery which could sometimes be used for good, and which had no detectable scent of demonology about it, the Catholic Church decided in 1350 to bring these forces under its authority. The Order of St. Boniface was originally charged with the elimination of evil wizardry and the protection of good Christians, but it also made special study of certain types of healing magick. Over time, it has protected itself from the temptations of power by focussing on its mission, although it remains a great deal more militant than the popular image of "mild–mannered exorcists" suggests. In recent centuries, it has also achieved a truly astounding capacity for ecumenical tolerance, with the result that its membership now extends to most varieties of Protestantism. However, Bonifacians are always priests, or at least formally recognized churchmen of some sort; as a result, the membership is almost entirely male, especially in Catholic areas, although some of the more eccentric

Protestant elements admit a few women. (In *GURPS* terms, Clerical Investment is effectively mandatory, and this in turn implies various Vows or Disciplines of Faith.)

The Holy Order has spread across the world; its high–mindedness and healing mission ensures that it is at least tolerated even by the American Freemasons, though it has predictably hostile dealings with any group using dark magick. Its only sigil is a short prayer, spoken when members feel the need to identify themselves.

Bonifacian libraries hold *The Ritual Writing of Psychic Binding* and *The Realm of the Unknown Mind*; the latter is not quite "officially sanctioned," but is considered useful and generally acceptable.

#### 4.3.11 The Ancient Brotherhood of the Druidic Temple

Tracing their origins through ancient Celtic priests to the Neolithic age, the Druids preserve ancient herbal lore and at least a sense of animistic theology along with their elemental magicks (although many members bury this beneath a more modern religious faith of some sort). They maintain an attitude of detachment from the squabbles of other Orders, only reacting if their sacred groves or old standing stones are threatened; however, their members may be encountered going about their mundane business almost anywhere, at least in rural areas.

Those "sacred" places are always deep in forests or wildernesses; the Druids have ancient pacts with the Faerie folk, and

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are never threatened when traveling to their ceremonies. They are strongest in Britain, Ireland, Brittany, and northern Europe, but have some presence across the continent. Their symbols are mistletoe and holly, often depicted in Celtic-style jewelry (such as cloak pins or torcs). Their lore was traditionally passed down orally, but today, members are permitted to study written records of their style of magick; *The Manuscript of Elemental Shaping* is actually quite old, although *Burton's On the Raised Forces of Nature* is a very modern, definitive study of archaic shamanic techniques.

### 4.3.12 Falkenstein Magick, GURPS Magic, and GURPS Voodoo

Obviously, magick in the world of *Castle Falkenstein* is not like standard *GURPS* spell-casting. It is considerably slower, rather more flexible, and generally more powerful. Knowledgeable *GURPS* devotees will recognize that, in fact, it bears more resemblance to the ritual magic system detailed in *GURPS Voodoo*. The chief difference is that rituals in the *Voodoo* game-world are costly designed to summons helpful spirits, while *Castle Falkenstein* ritual castings serve to gather and concentrate the "Thaumic Energy" needed to empower a spell. Still, leaving aside the precise nature and history of the two settings, magic[k]-workers from either would look pretty much at home in the other. (However, the *Falkenstein* system uses standard *GURPS* Magery rather than *Voodoo* "Initiation," and also has a place for standard-*GURPS*-style Magic Resistance.)

On the other hand, *GURPS Basic Set* spells are *not* appropriate in *Falkenstein* games. Plenty of magickal researchers in the *Falkenstein* world try to develop fast, reliable, formulaic spells, but they don't succeed. According to some New European theorists, there are fundamental reasons for this.

Auberon of Faerie claims that there are indeed universes in which secretive, solitary wizards fling fireballs and cure wounds with casual abandon. He refers to this as "Hermetic" magick, and that of the *Falkenstein* world as "Scholastic" magick, dependent on large bodies of knowledge passed down by substantial schools and colleges of sorcery. His friend Grey Morrolan theorizes that these different universes have different energy patterns. In some, background Thaumic energy levels are low, but individuals embody high levels of personal energy, which they can "Unravel" from themselves with minimal risk; these universes produce "Hermetic" sorcerers. In others, the background "free" energy is high, and can be tapped by efficient rituals, but personal levels are low; hence the ritualistic "Scholastic" style. A "Hermetic" caster in the *Falkenstein* universe would almost literally tear himself to pieces attempting to cast a simple spell; a *Falkenstein* wizard in a world of "Hermetic" wizardry would never be able to access sufficient energy to do useful work.

This, however, is just a theory. Research is ongoing — when Morrolan can find the time and think of appropriate experiments.

### 4.3.13 "Styles" of Ritual

The system provided here is a generalized abstraction of the reality of magick in New Europa. For role-playing purposes, it is important to note that two different sorcerers may produce similar results by means of radically different rituals, depending on their training and background.

The point is that each school of magick teaches its own idiosyncratic method for gathering Thaumic Energy, which takes the form of a style of ritual activity; thus, two sorcerers from the same background aiming for very different results will behave in far more similar ways than two sorcerers from different schools aiming for identical results. Sorcerers can be terribly snobbish about their styles, each claiming that their own school has the most efficient approach, but most have

the sense to recognize that the differences are mostly marginal, and take at least a casual interest in other techniques. Much of the academic study that makes up Thaumatology skill focuses on the underlying nature of rituals.

Actually, many sorcerers use rituals of a *broadly* similar style. Members of Orders with a religious basis to their history or philosophy, such as Bonifacians, Templars, or Druids, use prayers or prayer-like meditation and invocations; conversely, members of the Temple of Ra, White Lodge, or Golden Dawn draw mystic symbols (often with an Egyptian or pseudo-Egyptian style) on which they then concentrate, while the more "scientific" Illuminati meditate on complex metaphysical puzzles.

Then again, "exotic" sorcerers may use very different magick. Shamans from around the world use wondrous assortments of rituals, dances, chants, drums, and fetishes; some such work "sympathetic" magick which demands parts of the target (blood, hair, or whatever), but which may avoid the range and familiarity problems encountered by other styles. Elsewhere again, Asian mystics perform graceful Tai Chi-style movements, or meditate on Buddhist sutras. Some Asian sorcerers can apparently store gathered energy within their own bodies, enabling them to perform startling physical feats and even to fly or throw fireballs, but *not* to direct it for subtler external effects such as healing or transformation of others. Certain Tantric cults are said (to the lurid fascination of other sorcerers) to engage in ritual non-orgasmic sex to gather power; obviously, this is only a viable basis for magick-working if they can retain the energy for later use.

#### 4.3.14 Unraveling

There is one way to acquire Thaumic Energy rapidly and efficiently; unfortunately, it is also highly dangerous to the caster, or, much worse, lethal to others. This is *Unravelling* — the use of the magick inherent in the life-forces of living things.

A sorcerer who decides to Unravel himself merely spends one turn of concentration; GMs may, if they wish, also require a Will roll. The sorcerer then takes one hit point of damage, with **no** reductions for Toughness or DR, for every point of Thaumic Energy he wishes to spend. (This is "unaligned" energy, equally useful for all types of magick.) Unraveling is as dangerous and painful as a wound from a weapon; however, penalties to dice rolls do not take effect until the next round, so any *immediate* actions the sorcerer takes associated with an the magick-working are not penalized. Also, Will rolls to continue an associated ritual (to gather further energy) are at +5. Damage from self-Unraveling may take the form of heart palpitations, bruising and internal bleeding, or muscle seizures.

It is also possible to Unravel other living things. However, the cost of the magick needed to draw on another's life-energy is always higher than the energy gained, so there is little point — unless the victim is killed in the course of the procedure. In other words, Unraveling others requires blood sacrifice. Furthermore, the most effective procedures usually seem to involve *human* subjects. This is the basis of various dark sacrifice-cults, and it is invariably regarded as evil. Several Sorcerous Orders take it as a primary duty to hunt down anyone indulging in this; the destruction of the Aztec Empire at the hands of the Spanish was partly inspired by the Templars, who have been on the lookout for secret surviving Aztec sacrifice-cults ever since.

Even the idea of Unraveling a non-sentient living thing, such as a domestic animal, is widely regarded with suspicion and distaste, if only because it might lead to worse things. Nonetheless, *some* sorcerers have been known to resort to such techniques in desperate circumstances. If PCs ever decide they need Thaumic Energy this badly, a Thaumatology roll may be needed to improvise an appropriate ritual, and if any other sorcerers ever hear of the incident, the PCs will find



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that they have acquired a large negative Reputation, and possibly a few fanatical Templars as Enemies.

### 4.3.15 Why Paris Isn't Burning

A brief analysis of the Magick Rules given here will soon suggest an unpleasant possibility; that a moderately competent sorcerer with the right knowledge and enough time could whip up a spell that could enslave an entire city full of people, or simply burn it to the ground. This is correct, and in fact, such things have been done, once or twice. However, there are good reasons why petulant novice wizards do not and cannot behave this badly very often.

To begin with, the magickal energies available in any region at any time are finite. According to certain renowned Professors of Thaumatology, in any area of 273 miles from a significant magickal nexus–point (which may or may not be easily identified), there is approximately 140 points of energy available for use at any time — or only some 100 points or so if the caster (wisely) prefers to avoid harmonics. In practice, the figure is usually rather less, as other magick–workers are forever tapping the ether for power for their own spells, and in any case, the chance of gathering all that power without a catastrophic runaway is obviously small. (Power floods back into the area, in chaotic, randomized form, when the spell for which it was gathered is cast or cancelled.)

And secondly, speaking of those other sorcerers — many of them take an idle or officious interest in large workings in their neighborhood, and may well have and use spells to locate and analyze what is being done. Thus, they may well intervene with their own magickal powers to protect their homes and friends. In any case, the chances are that the area of effect of the spell will intersect with various wards or protections (not to say groups of resistant beings), forcing the cost of the casting ever higher.

Thus, the limits on gross magick are practical and social rather than absolute. GMs should feel free to restrain PC enthusiasm with whatever nuisances or surprises they feel appropriate, and should not permit players to bully them into condoning excess.

### 4.3.16 Other Sorcerous Orders

The Orders and Lorebooks detailed in this volume represent the largest and best–known groups currently operating in the West. However, there are many more factions, each with their own lore. *The Book of Sigils*, published by R.Talsorian Games, goes into this subject in more detail, detailing many more Orders and Lorebooks, and also providing further rules and options for magick that can easily be adapted to *GURPS* rules. The following are just some of the minor Orders known to exist:

*The Cabinet of Cups and Wands* are associated with the theater, and wield all manner of effects that can be used on stage and for other entertainments.

*The Ancient Order of Cthonian Time* are a small, shadowy, rather dubious group who seek to transcend death by the use of magick. Their lore concerns physiology and time.

*The Grand Chamber of the Eleusinian Mysteries* are magickal detectives, whose subtle spells augment their skills in this.

*The Order of Prospero* are travelers, "whose Chapterhouse is the open road."

*The Order of the Golden Mean* are a relatively modern order of sorcerer–engineers, with lore that augments their practical skills.

*The Jester's Guild* are pranksters, and always members of other Orders as well; their only spell causes other magick to develop disruptive random harmonics.

*The Firebrand's Club* is now defunct; it was a short–lived society of French and American revolutionaries (rumored to include Adams, Jefferson and Robespierre). However, the Lorebook which it created ("The Manual of Primal Forces Raised") has recently been rediscovered, and is the subject of intensive research, as it appears to offer a bridge between magick and the most advanced theories of scientific physics.

#### 4.3.16.1 Women's Orders

There are various all–female Orders, balancing the number of major groups who retain old rules barring women from membership. Among them, *The League of Isis* and *The Sisterhood of Sekhmet* are yet more factions who claim Egyptian origins; the former use magick that derives from that of many old midwives and wise–women, while the latter appear to be bored upper–class womenfolk and determined recruits from lower social levels. *The Illuminated Sisters of Bayreuth* recruit similarly, but seem more focussed on various radical social causes, while *The Order of Cassandra* concern themselves almost entirely with magickal medicine; *The Theosophic Daughters of Lemuria* pursue peculiar mystical theories of prehistory, while *The Ladies' Sewing Circle, Marching, and Chowder Society* is a purely American group designed to permit women in that country to study magick without bringing down the wrath of the all–male local Freemasons.

#### 4.3.16.2 Arabian Magickal Groups

The magickal traditions of the Muslim East in the *Falkenstein* world are extensive and somewhat obscure to Westerners. Given how much of the lore known to the Western Orders is said to have originated in this area, they are usually assumed to be powerful; Arabian and Turkish sorcerers also deal extensively with djinn (see p. 00), which suggests power and also either courage or arrogance. (In fact, they have access to spells dating back to the age of King Solomon which can control these beings.) The following covers some of the known Middle Eastern groups.

To begin with, there are the mystical Dervish Orders, including the formerly influential *Bektashi*, the high–minded *Mehlevis*, the wandering, unworldly *Kalendari*, and the militant *Senusis*. Members of all these factions have varied and unpredictable access to a range of magickal lore, although most are more concerned with Sufi religious mysticism. Among secular Middle Eastern sorcerers, *The Wielders of the Balance* are the most blatantly active, being descended from a guild of bazaar wizards, while *The Brotherhood of Purity* is more subtle and efficiently secretive, supposedly pursuing knowledge for its own sake but possibly possessing hidden objectives.

The courts of the Ottoman Empire are hotbeds of magickal power. The vast harem is full of concubines from all over the Empire, who sometimes have nothing better to do with their time than to exchange odd knowledge and pursue power; the long–established faction known as *The Sisterhood of Roxelana* apply magick to this end. In addition, the all–powerful Court Viziers are frequently very powerful magickal adepts; many have been trained by some Dervish Order, but they also form a small "Order" of their own, known as *The Diwan of the Golden Road*, which has access to an exceptional magickal library.

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And there are deeper shadows, too. Rumors that the fanatical medieval sect of the Assassins survives, and is using magick along with assassination to reshape the world to its own strange ends, are usually dismissed; people do not *want* to believe it. Meanwhile, out in the desert, the Bedouin tribes have their own magick-workers; the strange poet-sorcerers known as *Sha'irs*.

It should also be noted that old Arabian magick seems to have been exceptionally good at creating permanently-enchanted items of great power. Tales of flying carpets and magick swords from this part of the world should not be dismissed out of hand.

### 4.3.16.3 Magick in Other Lands

Further beyond the Western world, there are numerous "local" traditions, who can be treated as Orders for practical purposes (albeit with Lorebooks taking strange, un-book-like forms). *The Path of the Spirit World* represents the tribal medicine-workers of Africa, while *The Mighty Hand of Tezcatlipoca* preserve Central American styles of sorcery, *The Great Pipestone Lodge* wields the knowledge of the medicine men of the Twenty Nations, and so on. Some such factions have mingled their knowledge with other ideas, leading to the sinister zombie-making Voudon of *The Carrefour de la Tour Rouge* and the strange mingling of Druidic and Native American lore mastered by *The Foursquare of Harlech*. In Asia, of course, there are countless ancient and powerful groups; alchemists, martial arts adepts, students of arts taught by the local dragons to their human relatives, and so on.

## Chapter 7. Steam, Steel and Science

"I sell here, Sir, what all the world desires to have — POWER." — Matthew Boulton, Steam Engineer.

The era of GURPS Castle Falkenstein is rightly known as the Age of Steam. It is almost impossible to overstate how much steam power has transformed the world. For all of human history, just about the only way to do anything was by human or animal muscle power. Wind and water power had their uses, but were unreliable or limited to certain locations. Steam provides a portable, controllable source of nearly unlimited power, and engineers have been quick to find a whole range of applications. Railroads have revolutionized land transport, steamships have done the same at sea, and steam-powered digging and tunnelling machines are literally transforming the landscape of the Steam Age.

But in the world of Castle Falkenstein, that is only the beginning. The scientists and inventors of New Europa and America have taken the power of steam to even more fantastic levels. Devices and vehicles which were nothing more than daydreams or visions in our history are real machines there, and bizarre contraptions which could never have worked in our world are as ordinary as railroads or gaslight.

### BB Technology in New Europa

The technology level of New Europa and the world of Castle Falkenstein

doesn't fit the standard GURPS technology scale. While it is basically TL 5 in most respects, there are a number of technologies and applications which would ordinarily appear much later.

The ordinary machinery of everyday life in New Europa is mostly standard TL5 equipment — steam-powered railroads, paddle-wheel steamboats, coal gas for light and heat, bicycles, Gatling guns, telegraphs and the like. A person from our own 1870s would be right at home, at least at first. But after a while that visitor might start noticing strange devices and fantastic inventions which didn't seem to belong: clockwork robots, steam ornithopters, calculating engines, giant cannon, submarines and dirigibles. They couldn't be built at TL5, but they don't really match the world of TL6, either.

The best way to describe the GURPS Castle Falkenstein technology is to call it TL 5+. Tech Level 5+ has all of the technological advances of the historical TL 5, plus a number of advances envisioned by Victorian visionaries. It lacks the technological breakthroughs of the Twentieth Century — radioactivity, quantum mechanics, molecular biology, solid-state physics or synthetic materials. In effect, TL 5+ is a variant technology track leading to a different set of advances.

Tech Level 5+ can be equated to TL6 for most game purposes: A TL5 character has a -5 skill penalty with TL5+ devices, and TL5+ character has -1 skill with TL5 equipment. Healing rates and aging rolls are the same as for TL6, and so on. But the specific methods used by TL6 and TL5+ are different. In particular, a TL7 crossworld traveller using TL5+ equipment must take the -2 skill from going back to TL5 and an additional -5 skill from working forward to TL5+, for a net -7; a TL5+ character using TL7 has a net penalty of 11 (-1 plus two levels of -5).

Tech Level 5+ is the highest technology available in a GURPS Castle Falkenstein setting. All characters from the advanced parts of the world (New Europa, America and Japan) as well as all Dwarfs are assumed to be at TL 5+ (with a substantial amount of ordinary TL5 equipment); the rest of the world ranges from TL5 down to TL0.

#### CC Anachronistic Technology

The most visible sign of TL 5+ technology is the existence of anachronistic technology or "anachrotech." These are devices which ordinarily would not appear for decades, but which have been created early by Steam Age gadgeteers. Examples include steam automotives (automobiles), calculating engines (mechanical computers), and Landfortresses (tanks). This is the "mainstream" of TL 5+ technology — things which were envisioned or attempted by Victorian science but which had to wait for improvements in materials or power.

Anachrotech devices are freely available in the industrial nations of New Europa. They are not the preserve of inventors or gadgeteers. Anyone can

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purchase a steam automotive, as the traffic jams on Picadilly and the Place de la Concorde attest. Most anachrotech is simply TL6 or higher devices built using steam and clockwork instead of internal combustion and electronics.

Gamemasters with a rigorous number-crunching bent can design their own Anachrotech using GURPS Vehicles and other technology sourcebooks. Others can simply create anachrotech devices by taking modern-day devices and "Victorianizing" them with brass gears, clockwork and puffing steam engines.

### CC Dwarf Technology

Possibly the most advanced technology in the Castle Falkenstein world belongs to the Dwarfs. While they are no better at engineering and invention than humans, they do have an inborn gift for metallurgy, and as a result Dwarf craftsmen can use alloys and metals which are otherwise unavailable to Steam Age designers. Stainless steel and aluminum are standard for Dwarf technology, and some cutting-edge Dwarf metallurgists are experimenting with working titanium.

Some Dwarfish metals and alloys are already in general use, making some common anachrotech devices possible, but when the Dwarfs want to make special items they can employ advanced materials unavailable to human craftsmen, making their creations lighter and more efficient. In game terms, Dwarf technology is TL5+ but can make use of materials from up to TL7. All Dwarf-built machinery is 10 percent lighter than human construction because of superior metals.

When Dwarfs get really creative they can produce metals of almost impossible strength and lightness. This requires a Dwarf Gadgeteer to invent metals of higher TL, but the results can be very amazing. The ships of the Bayernese Aeronavy depend on a Dwarfish super-alloy for their armored gasbags.

Dwarfs still prefer high-quality individual craftsmanship to mass production. While this means they probably will never be able to compete with human factories in output, their goods have a ready market despite high cost. Dwarf-built weapons and equipment are all at least Fine quality, and some specially-crafted items are Very Fine.

Melee weapons have the normal +1 bonus to damage, and guns get a +1 Acc bonus. Machinery constructed by Dwarfs is more durable and reliable as well: Fine quality vehicles have a +1 HT and divide maintenance cost by four. Very Fine vehicles have +2 HT and a maintenance cost divided by 20. This workmanship doesn't come cheap, however; Fine quality goods have the standard 4 times base cost, and Very Fine goods cost 20 times the list price.

Note that it is possible for a Dwarf to do a "rush job" and produce something of merely Good quality, but no Dwarf would willingly make

anything that was Poor or Very Poor. Anyone asking a Dwarf to do shoddy work is likely to lose his services for good, and may lose some teeth in the process!

### CC Magickal Technology

The most fascinating new technology in New Europa is Engine Magick. Developed from drawings in a recently rediscovered lost work by Leonardo Da Vinci, Engine Magick is the art of building machines which can themselves cast spells. (Dwarfs, in particular, are very excited about the idea that they might be able to use magic again by means of machinery.) Presently Engine Magick is a tightly-guarded secret of the Second Compact; only a handful of people know anything about how it works.

Each Sorcerous Automaton can cast one spell, and draws Thaumic Energy in a steady and controlled manner. There is no chance of Wild Magic or harmonics when an Automaton is operating. They can be designed to keep casting one spell over and over, or to keep the spell in effect continuously, or to cast it only once, depending on the wishes of the designer. The Automaton can keep running as long as it has power. Note that Sorcerous Automata must have a source of mechanical power; they cannot use Magick as an energy source. The prospect of a Magick-powered spellcasting machine is more than a little alarming. Sorcerous Automata are usually powered by steam, compressed air, clockwork or electric batteries. It is important to note that the power supply operates the spell-casting machinery; it does not power the spell directly. Sorcerous Automata can (and do) unleash tremendous amounts of energy, well beyond what their powerplants can supply. Sorcerous Automata have one unique advantage over living spellcasters: because they themselves are only machines, the relationship to the target doesn't have any effect. Automata affect all targets equally. (Magic Resistance still has its effect.)

The range and power of a Sorcerous Automaton depends on the size of the device. The following table gives some idea of size, range and power.

#### Size Range Effect Power Required

Tiny (10lbs., 1cf)	50 ft.	small objects/12 square ft.	1kW
Small (50 lbs., 4cf)	900 ft.	medium objects/30 sf	5kW
Medium (200 lbs., 16cf)	9000 ft.	large objects/60 sf	20kW
Large (1000 lbs., 80cf)	50 miles	huge objects	100kW
Huge (10 tons, 2000cf)	500 miles	whole city blocks	2000kW
Immense (1000 tons, 100,000cf)	5000 miles	whole cities	200,000 kW.

Creating a Sorcerous Automaton requires both a Gadgeteer and a sorcerer.

The Gadgeteer must have access to the secret of Engine Magick and the sorcerer must know the spell the device is to cast. Creating the machine is a straightforward process of invention as described on page CI121.

Sorcerous Automata are naturally Amazing gadgets, and their TL is the basic TL5+ of the GURPS Castle Falkenstein world. Automata generally cost about

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\$10,000 per pound.

Depending on the type of spell, the Primary Spell Generator (the heart of the machine) has a particular appearance. For Emotional aspect spells, the device is likely to have spinning concentric circles of metal rings, set with tiny hooks and metal cups. Material spells usually involve complex gears and jointed metal rods moving in complicated patterns. Spiritual spells generally require shiny metal globes, odd pendulums and balance beams swinging back and forth. And Elemental spell generators tend to have jointed metal parts with knobs that clack together, ratcheting up a long screw.

Engine Magick is mostly limited to the construction of Plot Devices: player characters are unlikely to be in on the secret of building Sorcerous Automata, so fantastic spellcasting machines are probably going to be the property of NPCs. In the course of an adventure characters may try to steal them, sabotage them, recover them or destroy them, but they should remain firmly under the control of the Gamemaster.

### SB Why Does It Work?

Visitors from our world experiencing the bizarre technology of New Europa may be puzzled at how it works at all. Even allowing for superior Dwarf workmanship it still seems impossible for, say, a steam-powered helicopter to get off the ground. More puzzling still is how genius inventors can make things like "ether propellers" or "freeze projectors" which are flatly impossible according to physical law as we understand it.

There are two explanations, both of which may be partly true. The "scientific" explanation is that the laws of the Castle Falkenstein universe are a little different. Material strength may be a little higher, frictional forces may be a little lower, and power plants may work a little more efficiently because the laws of physics there allow them to. The differences in physical law aren't enough to notice normally, but they permit machines to function in New Europa which would be nothing but crackpot notions in Europe.

The second explanation is that there's a little bit of magick involved. When engineers in the world of Castle Falkenstein build new inventions, they're unconsciously weaving a magickal spell into their construction. This enchantment allows the machine to function despite normal physical laws. It's notable that the most fantastic and impossible devices are those created by lone genius inventors who may well have a touch of magickal talent.

### BB Fantastic Inventions

If anachrotech, dwarf engineering and engine magick aren't impressive enough, the world of Castle Falkenstein is also a world of amazing inventions. Most incredible inventions are a benefit to the public, but

there are some sinister masterminds who have turned their creations to Evil. In a GURPS Castle Falkenstein campaign, inventions can be "MacGuffins" created by NPC inventors, tools of conquest for Criminal Masterminds, or else secret weapons for characters to employ in their adventures.

Inventors are a special breed — the Gadgeteer advantage is required. Unlike ordinary engineers, who are bound by the limits of available technology, inventors can make use of discoveries from any Tech Level, as described in the Inventing rules (CI121–125).

Gamemasters who want a campaign with lots of weird gadgets and superscientific wonder-weapons can make it easier on their inventor characters. Simply declare that all "superscience" technologies (things unknown to modern science like contragravity, teleportation, mind control rays and the like) start at a Tech Level only a few stages removed from the base TL 5+ — TL 10, say, or TL 7 if the gamemaster really wants to liven things up.

#### CC Using GURPS Vehicles

Constructing fantastic Steam Age vehicles and weapons for GURPS Castle Falkenstein can be done using the standard GURPS Vehicles rules. The base technology is TL5+. For most purposes treat this as TL 6, with the following exceptions:

Arm subassemblies are permitted, using their standard TL7 values. Most robot arms at TL5+ have Bad Grip and Poor Coordination. Tentacle arms must be invented by Gadgeteer characters.

Streamlining is limited to TL5 levels, and lifting bodies are not available. Dwarf builders can use TL7 materials at ten times the usual cost; other materials are standard TL6. Only wood, metal and TL6 nonrigid armor are available (ablative, composite and laminate armors require nonmetallic materials which not even Dwarfs have developed). Inventors can create advanced nonmetal materials as inventions.

Available propulsion systems include everything up to TL5 plus helicopter drivetrains, tracked drivetrains, leg drivetrains and ornithopter drivetrains. Jet engines and liquid-fuel rockets are not available (unless invented by Gadgeteers), but solid-fuel rockets are, up to TL6. Exotic "weird science" drives like reactionless thrusters, contragravity, parachronic drives and stardrives may be created by genius inventors, in which case they use whatever the values are for the initial tech level at which they appear.

Helium as a lifting gas is only available in Texas; it costs 10 times the listed price there and 100 times the listed price elsewhere in the world. Most airships elsewhere use hydrogen or hot air, although sorcerers can magickally turn air into helium. Antigravity coatings must be invented, and cost at least \$100 per square foot. Magickal levitation is possible — see



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the chapter on Magick.

Instruments, communication devices, and sensors are TL5 (which means nothing but searchlights, telescopes and pre-radio communicators are available). Gadgeteers may create primitive versions of radar, sonar, MAD or other sensors as inventions. Cameras (other than still photo cameras) do not exist but TL6 wax cylinder flight recorders are available. Navigation devices are all TL5 or lower. Targeting systems are all TL5, though targeting computers can be built using Calculation Engines. Most miscellaneous equipment is TL5; TL6 airlocks exist, as do TL6 security systems, vehicle storage, and landing aids. Screen generators, reality stabilizers and forcefields can only be built as inventions. Maneuver controls, crew stations and quarters are all TL5, crew requirements are those of TL6 systems. Life support is TL5, but inventors building spacecraft may opt to invent TL7 full life support. Artificial gravity can only be created by spinning the hull. Battlesuits and exoskeletons can be invented but are not otherwise available; the control system for a Steam Age TL5+ battlesuit has twice the TL8 weight and volume and costs 10 times as much.

Powerplants are almost always TL5 steam engines or TL6 steam turbines. Internal combustion engines are not available, nor are gas turbines or fuel cells. Inventors who are willing to risk destruction by penetrating the secrets of the Atom can build TL7 fission reactors at 10 times the listed cost; such "radium furnaces" are very delicate — any time one is damaged the operator must make a Mechanic or Engineering roll to prevent it from blowing up in a colossal explosion!

Clockwork energy banks and TL6 flywheels are available, as are TL6 lead-acid batteries. Inventors can improve either up to higher-TL efficiencies. Wood and coal are the standard fuels for steam engines, although petroleum is available, especially in Russia and America. Most surface and external features are TL5. Solar cells are not available, but solar-heated boilers are — design them using reflectors (equivalent to TL9 solar cells) plus a steam engine of equivalent power output. The steam engine needs no fuel, but only works as long as the solar reflector is pointing at the Sun. Obviously, solar boilers don't work in the dark, so prudent designers might want to include some sort of energy bank to store power for nighttime.

Armaments are limited to TL5 guns, mechanical artillery, liquid projectors and rockets, though a player character or NPC might be able to invent more advanced beam weapons or other Infernal Devices. When designing weapons, use the TL5 limits. The only exception is that guns can be built with any bore size down to 1mm and may have Extremely Long barrels. The standard Malfunction statistic for guns is 16 — the "late TL5" value.

The maximum vehicle structural HT is 12, and if the vehicle is built by Dwarfs it can be 13 or 14. Dwarfs also add one TL for the purpose of

determining a weapon's Malfunction rating. This does not apply to beam weapons or other "weird science" devices.

Because \$1 in New Europa is worth considerably more than the standard used for GURPS Vehicles, divide all prices by 10 to get the final cost of any fantastic vehicle or infernal machine.

#### SB Malfunctions

When devices in the Castle Falkenstein world malfunction, they don't do it in a small way — generally they either keep working or fail catastrophically. Whenever a vehicle fails a HT roll, or an invented weapon gets a Malfunction result on a to-hit roll, use the following table.

(Ordinary off-the-shelf weapons use the standard critical failure rules.)

3, 4 — The weapon or device goes up in a spectacular explosion. The force of the blast is equal to twice the damage value of the weapon, or else 10d, and is centered on the firing chamber or the power source. Characters nearby can make a DX roll to dive for cover or get clear of the explosion.

5, 6 — Reverse function. The vehicle starts running in reverse, the device do the opposite of its normal function, or the weapon backfires doing normal damage to the user.

7, 8 — The item catches on fire. In the case of a vehicle this means characters must hold their breaths long enough to get out or else be overcome by smoke. A gun on fire does damage equal to one shot each round until the user can toss it away; beam weapons or other devices do 1d per round to anyone at the control panel or inside the device.

9, 10 — The weapon or device makes a weird noise and belches out a cloud of smoke, but then works normally again.

11, 12 — Failure is imminent; unless the user makes a successful skill roll to operate the device or weapon, next round it will fail completely.

13, 14 — The machine works normally this time, but in the process destroys itself so that it cannot be used again.

15, 16 — The item starts shaking and giving off smoke as it tears itself apart inside. Weapon users or passengers in a vehicle are blackened but unhurt, but the machine is a total loss and cannot be fixed.

17, 18 — The device goes out of control! Weapons or other devices begin firing wildly until all ammunition or power is expended; vehicles take off at top speed in a random direction. Characters on board can attempt a skill roll each turn to bring it back under control.

#### BB Creating Gadgets

Of course, you don't have to be an inventor to have fun with weird Steam Age gadgetry. Craftsmen and mechanics in all the cities of New Europa do a steady business supplying customers with custom-built devices. Hardly a gentleman in New Europa would be caught dead without a sword-cane or a

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pocketwatch with a built-in camera.

The real champions of gadgetry are spies and secret agents. They arm themselves with pistols hidden in walking-sticks, acid vials in cufflinks, garrotes in rings and flashbombs in watches. Even fairly conventional intelligence agencies like the British or French equip their agents with at least a couple of clever gadgets, while the Prussians or the gizmo-happy Americans seem unable to stir from headquarters without a whole hidden arsenal.

Buying "off-the-shelf" gadgets is fairly simple. The customer picks an item and chooses what gadgets to incorporate into it. The cost is the cost of the base item and the gadgets, plus 20 percent. The work takes one day per included device. Of course, not every personal item has room for every sort of gadget. You can't fit a parachute into a wedding ring. The two tables below list the price and available "gadget spaces" for some common accessories, and the cost and size of some popular gizmos.

### Item Cost Spaces

Ring (large cameo ring) \$4 1  
Snuffbox \$3 2  
Cigarette Case \$4 2  
Walking-Stick \$3 3  
Cloak Pin \$3 1  
Brooch \$3 1  
Gun Belt (belt and holster) \$4 2  
Coat \$8 6  
Gloves (riding or ladies' formal) \$2 2  
Hat (top hat or wide-brimmed ladies') \$2 3  
Book (hollowed out) \$2 3  
Pocket-watch (large) \$3 2  
Umbrella \$4 2  
Pen \$3 1  
Sword-hilt \$8 1  
Prosthetic Limb (clockwork) \$50 4

### Gadget Description Cost Spaces

Air Bottle 5-minute supply \$1 3  
Acid Vial Tiny glass tube doing 3d on impact \$2 1  
Blowgun Extending tube with 3 drug darts \$1 1  
Bolo Metal balls joined by wire \$2 2  
Brass Knuckles 8 linked metal rings \$2 2  
Caltrops 6 small spiked balls \$1 3  
Camera Tiny box camera with 4 shots \$6 4  
Chemistry Lab Tiny chemical vials test tubes \$10 4  
Claws 4 rings with claws (punch does cutting damage) \$4 2

Compass Dime-sized magnetic compass \$1 1  
 Crampons Folding metal climbing cleats for shoes \$12 4  
 Drug Needle 4 drugged hypodermic needles \$2 1  
 Drill Hand drill with 4 bits \$4 2  
 Explosive Guncotton doing 2d-3 concussion damage \$15 2  
 First Aid Kit Bandages, smelling salts, iodine \$6 3  
 Flash Bomb Blinding magnesium flare (Flash attack) \$5 1  
 Flasher Torch with spring-loaded signalling cover \$2 1  
 Fuse 5 minutes' worth of fuse cord \$1 1  
 Garrote Strangling wire with finger-grip rings \$1 1  
 Gas Atomiser Sprays 2 doses of chloroform or gas \$3 2  
 Grapple Folding grappling hook and 20 ft. cable \$4 3  
 Hidden Blade Spring-loaded dagger \$3 2  
 Icepick 6" steel needle (as dagger) \$2 2  
 Ice Skates Folding metal blades to clip on shoes \$10 4  
 Invisible Ink Pen Pen, ink and special glasses to see ink \$1 2  
 Life Preserver Inflatable rubber float \$3 4  
 Lockpick 4 picks skeleton keys \$2 1  
 Magnifier Tiny magnifying lens \$1 1  
 Microscope Tiny microscope and 2 slides \$4 2  
 Nitroglycerine Small vial, does 2d-2 concussion \$20 1  
 Parachute One-man silk parachute \$25 5  
 Periscope Tiny scope extends 1 ft. \$8 2  
 Pistol 2-shot Derringer \$30 2  
 Ratchet Hand-crank pulley for cable climbing \$10 3  
 Rocket Tiny single-shot rocket (see weapon stats) \$25 2  
 Sextant Navigation device and tables \$7 3  
 Signal Flare Tiny rocket with parachute, burns 3 min. \$7 2  
 Snorkel 2ft. breathing tube \$2 3  
 Telegraph Tiny morse key, 20' wire, battery \$15 3  
 Telescope Tiny 20x telescope \$6 2  
 Timer Clockwork 60-min timer with chime \$3 1  
 Tool Kit 2 screwdrivers, wrench, hammer \$6 2  
 Torch Magnesium lamp with lens \$6 2  
 Umbrella 1-person parasol \$2 4  
 Watchwork Tiny watch with chime \$1 1  
 Whistle Policeman's whistle \$1 1  
 Wire Saw 2ft. wire saw with finger rings \$2 1

#### BB Some Steam Age Devices and Weapons

The fantastic technology of the Steam Age has produced an amazing range of devices, from useful machines like Steam Unicycles or Calculation Engines to terrifying engines of destruction like Giant Steam Automata. Some of these devices are commercially available, others are the property of the

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Great Powers, and some are the creations of lone inventors.

### CC The Albatross

Created by the mad genius Robur, who calls himself the "Master of the World," the Albatross is a flying machine unlike anything else in the skies of New Europa. Built in the shape of a ship, the Albatross is held aloft by banks of airscrews, so that it is effectively a giant helicopter. The ship's size and performance are made possible by two of Robur's inventions: composite materials (in this case a form of paper), and highly-advanced electrical accumulators (equivalent to TL 8 power cells). The Albatross is armed with bombs and some small arms, so that while Robur can easily terrorize ground targets, he is vulnerable to attack by other airships. The Albatross has power to run its motors at maximum output for only 6 hours, but once in flight can cruise for 24 hours using dynamic lift. The cost of the Albatross is unknown because many of its features are Robur's own inventions.

Subassemblies: Six Rotors

Body Features: Good streamlining

Propulsion: Six 200-kW TL5+ Helicopter drivetrains.

Weaponry: Internal bomb bay holding ten 100-lb bombs.

Instruments: TL5 navigation instruments.

Controls: TL5+ mechanical controls. Crew Stations: Five crew in normal positions (pilot, navigator, two engineers and bombardier).

Occupancy: Long-duration. Passengers: none. Crew: 11. Quarters: 10 bunks, one cabin.

Power: TL8 rechargeable power cells holding 7200 kWh.

Access, Cargo and Waste Space: 300cf access space.

Volume: Body 1550 cubic feet (increased to 1860 by streamlining), Rotors 78cf total. Surface Area: Body 1000sf, Rotors 240sf total.

Structure: TL7 Super-light Advanced structure.

Hit Points: Body 150, Rotors 12 each.

Armor: PD 4 DR16 TL7 advanced composite on body only.

Surface Features: Waterproof.

Statistics: Empty weight 11,140 lbs. Loaded weight 14,340 lbs. Volume 1938cf (size modifier +5). Price unknown, but certainly more than \$1 million. HT 7.

Aerial Performance: Stall speed 0mph (can hover). Amt 1920 lbs. Top speed 150mph (normal cruising speed 95mph). aAccel 3mph/s. aMR 1. aSR 2. aDecel 4.

### CC Bayernese Aerocruisers

These giants of the sky have catapulted Bayern to the ranks of the Great Powers and are a powerful symbol of the strength and promise of the Second Compact. While lift comes from ordinary hydrogen gas, the ship is propelled by a fantastic Sorcerous Engine, which generates the equivalent

of more than a hundred tons of thrust. The whole ship is made of extremely advanced Dwarf-made alloys. Naturally, Aerocruisers are a monopoly of the Bayernese government and are definitely not for sale.

Subassemblies: Gasbag envelope, 2 million cubic feet; turret 60cf; body 4000cf.

Body Features: Fair streamlining on gasbag, none on body.

Propulsion: One Magnetic Spell Engine.

Weaponry: One Gatling Gun aft, two 37mm rotary cannon in turret, 20 hardpoints for 100-lb bombs underside, giant crossbow forward. 1000 rounds of Gatling ammo, 100 cannon shells, 20 bombs, 20 crossbow bolts.

Instruments: TL5 navigation instruments.

Controls: Mechanical. Crew Stations: 12 cramped crewstations.

Occupancy: Passengers: 2 Crew: 12 Environmental Systems: none.

Quarters: 10 bunks, 2 cabins.

Power: TL5+ 200-kW steam turbine

Fuel: Light Fuel tank containing 8000 gallons of oil (28 days' endurance).  
8000 gallons of oil.

Access, Cargo and Waste Space: 205cf of access space, 60cf turret rotation.

Volume: 2,004,060 cf. Surface Area: Gasbag 95,244sf, Turret 100sf, Body 2000sf.

Structure: Gasbag: TL5+gasbag; Turret: medium advanced TL8 structure; Body: medium advanced TL8 structure.

Hit Points: Gasbag 952hp, Turret 150hp, Body 3000hp.

Armor: Gasbag PD2 DR2 TL8 advanced metal, Turret PD4 DR40 TL8 advanced metal, Body PD4 DR40 TL8 advanced metal.

Statistics: Empty Weight 65,158 lbs. Loaded Weight 119000 lbs. Size modifier +11. Price: \$1,438,647. HT 11 (+1 from Dwarf construction).

Air Performance: Static lift 135,135 lbs. Stall speed 0. AMT 250,000lbs.

Top Speed 190mph. aAccel 42mph/s. aMR .125. aSR 4. aDecel .5.

#### DD The Giant Crossbow

The most intriguing weapon aboard an Aerocruiser is a huge steel crossbow throwing a variety of specially-built bolts. Each bolt is more than a yard long, and they can be fitted with special heads --- explosive grenades, grapples, flaming incendiaries or nets.

Malf: crit; Type: imp; DAM 9d+2; 1/2D 455 yds; Max 569 yds; Acc 6; Wt. 338 lbs.; SS 20; RoF 1/40; Cost \$274; WPS 7lbs, VPS .07cf.; CPS variable.

#### CC Calculation Engines

The great mathematician and inventor Charles Babbage was able to find a patron to support his project to build a calculating engine which could actually be "programmed" to perform different operations. With the help of the Dwarf technician Jericho Watchmaker and the financial support of Napoleon III (via the ubiquitous Jules Verne), Babbage was able to construct a functioning Calculation Engine. Today, Calculation Engines (also called Babbage Engines) are everywhere --- controlling machinery in

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the huge factories of England, plotting shell trajectories for the mighty Verne Cannon, and sifting the reports of informants in the offices of the Prussian Secret Police.

Calculation Engines are simply TL5+ Hardened computers, and most (but not all) have the Dedicated option. The chief difference between Calculation Engines and the TL6 computers of our world is that the power supply for a Calculation Engine must be mechanical rather than electric — a steam engine, flywheel or clockwork. Because they are mechanical or pneumatic, Calculation Engines are completely immune to any electromagnetic effects. On the other hand, they are vulnerable to physical shock and vibration. Hitting a Calculation Engine or jolting its casing will make it commit errors, and any impact which causes any damage at all (even 1 point) requires a roll on the Malfunction table.

The biggest Calculation Engine currently in existence is the "Geant" which calculates firing trajectories for the Verne Cannon. The Geant is a TL5+ Macroframe, Dedicated and Hardened, with a Complexity of 4. The Geant runs a Complexity 4 Fire Direction program, giving the Verne Cannon a +5 bonus to hit when fired. It weighs 12 tons, cost \$300,000, and requires its own 100-kW steam turbine powerplant.

More versatile than the Geant is the experimental "Athena" Calculation Engine, built by Charles Babbage at Cambridge. Athena is a TL5+ Hardened Macroframe, with a Complexity of 2. It is comparable in size, weight and power consumption to the Geant, but cost \$1,500,000 to build. Athena is a true multipurpose computer, capable of running different programs. It is programmed by punch-cards and displays its output on a series of numerical dials.

A Calculation Engine commonly found in businesses, factories and laboratories is the McIntosh Calculating Engine, which weighs a mere 240 pounds and occupies 3 cubic feet. It costs \$2250, and can be powered by an office-boy turning a crank. The McIntosh is a TL5+ Minicomputer with the Dedicated and Hardened options. The program is built in at the time of purchase, and customers can choose from a variety of options: targeting, encryption and decryption, machinery control, accounting, statistics, or mathematical computation.

### CC Clockwork Prosthetics

The carnage of the Napoleonic wars gave a great impetus to inventors working on prosthetic limbs, and more recent conflicts like the Crimea and the American Civil War have only encouraged continual improvement of artificial limb technology. The most advanced prosthetics are clockwork-powered and are controlled by a sensitive network of rods and cables connected to the wearer's stump.

### DD Clockwork Arm

A clockwork arm has ST 14 for gripping and crushing only, weighs 30 lbs.

and costs \$50. Its clockwork power supply can keep it running for two hours between windings (less if the wearer is using the arm at full strength).

The DX of a clockwork arm is -4 for any task requiring fine manipulation, but otherwise is equal to the character's normal DX. Clockwork arms often have gadgets built in for the convenience of the wearer.

#### DD Clockwork Leg

Clockwork legs have ST 12 for kicking, but otherwise use the ST of the wearer. Because of balance problems, anyone with a clockwork leg must be at least Lame. They weigh 40 lbs. and cost \$50.

#### CC Giant Steam Automata

To many, the most terrifying symbol of the destructive possibilities of Steam is the existence of Giant Steam Automata. Looming nearly sixty feet tall, these huge man-shaped machines rival the Landfortresses and ironclads of the Great Powers in offensive might. The most successful Giant Steam Automata have been built in Japan by the scientific mastermind Lord Yoshikazu Tomino, but there are rumors that others elsewhere have been inspired to build their own mechanical giants.

Subassemblies: Two arms, two legs, turret head.

Propulsion: 1000-kW TL7 Leg drivetrain.

Weaponry: Two Hotchkiss 37mm rotary cannon, (RoF 5), 100 rounds each.

Miscellaneous: Two TL7 Cheap ST 150 arm motors with Bad Grip.

Controls: Mechanical. Crew Stations: One TL8 Battlesuit control system.

Occupancy: Short. Passengers: 2 (standing). Crew: 1 Environmental Systems: None.

Power: 1000-kW TL5+ steam turbine.

Fuel: Standard TL5 tank holding 360 gal. of oil, a 6-hour supply.

Access, Cargo and Waste Space: 86cf of access space in each leg, 12cf per arm, 536cf in body, 6cf in head.

Volume: Head 70cf, Arms 20cf each, Legs 170 each, Body 1100. Surface Area: Head 125sf, Arms 50sf each, Legs 200sf each, Body 800sf.

Structure: TL5+ Light Expensive structure.

Hit Points: Head 94hp, Arms 75hp, Legs 150, Body 600.

Armor: PD4 DR20 expensive Wood armor.

Vision: Poor. Details: Periscope view from front of head only.

Statistics: Empty weight 65,605. Loaded weight 68,925. Volume 1550cf. Size modifier +4. Price \$177,974. HT 7.

Ground Performance: Ground speed 40mph. gAccel 3mph/s. gDecel 20mph/s. gMR 1. gSR 1. Ground pressure: Moderate (off-road speed 27mph).

#### CC Ironclads

All the world's major navies have at least one or two steam-powered ironclad warships. The pioneers in this field were the Americans and the Confederate rebels, but since the end of the Civil War the United States



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has stuck with its increasingly obsolete monitors while the British and others have made tremendous progress in ironclad design. Ironclads come in a great variety of sizes and configurations, but a first-class British steam Dreadnought has a top speed of 20 mph, six-inch steel armor with PD 4 and DR 200, and is armed with eight-inch cannon doing 30x6d explosive damage with a range of a mile. Such vessels are the monopoly of major governments, and cost millions to build.

### CC The Nautilus

Captain Nemo's famous submarine vessel is still probably the most advanced machine of its type in the world. While most of its construction is fairly standard TL5+ work, the Nautilus is powered by an amazing electrical power plant which taps the very energies of the Atom. Consequently the Nautilus can range at will across the oceans, descend to unheard-of depths, and even venture beneath the impenetrable ice of the poles. The Nautilus is unarmed, save for a ram at the bow and an electrical apparatus to repel boarders.

The Nautilus does ramming damage of 6d+1 x 1600, so there are few ships which it cannot sink. No price for the Nautilus is listed because it includes Nemo's invented power supply and was apparently built by volunteers.

Body Features: Submersible hull with Submarine lines.

Propulsion: 34,000-kW TL5+ screw propellor.

Instruments: TL5+ searchlight with 1-mile range, TL5 navigation instruments.

Miscellaneous: Two-man airlock, Science lab, Workshop.

Controls: Mechanical. Crew Stations: Twenty normal crewstations.

Occupancy: Long. Passengers: Four. Crew: Twenty. Environmental Systems: Limited life system with 80 man-days endurance.

Power: 34,000 kW Fission reactor.

Volume 51,740cf. Surface Area: 10,683sf.

Structure: TL5+ Extra-heavy, Standard structure.

Hit Points: 64,100

Structural Options: Heavy compartmentalization.

Armor: DR150 standard TL5+ metal armor.

Surface Features: Ram, Electrified surface on the top deck only.

Vision: Fair normally, Poor with armor shields up.

Statistics: Empty weight 2,905,575 lbs. Loaded weight 2,910,375 lbs. Volume 51,740cf (Size Modifier +8). Submerged weight 3,233,750. Price incalculable. HT 9.

Water Performance: Water speed 30mph. wAccel 4 mph/s. wMR .05. wSR 4. wDecel1(3). Draft 23.4 ft.

Submerged Performance: Submerged speed 40mph. uAccel 3mph/s. uMR .05. uSR 4. uDecel 1(3). Draft 26 ft. Crush depth 6400 yards (over 3 miles!).

### CC Prussian Landfortresses

Landfortresses are the ironclads of the battlefield. Heavily armored and driven by steam, they lumber across open ground to bring their weapons to bear on enemy positions. Once the Landfortresses have broken through the enemy lines, Prussian infantry and cavalry can mop up the survivors. Though their sheer size alone makes them terrifying on the battlefield,

Landfortresses are not invincible. Their armor is heaviest on the front, but the back and running gear are virtually unprotected. Even in the best of conditions they are painfully slow, and muddy ground can bog them down completely. The vehicle must halt to fire the main weapons. Finally, Landfortresses are built to operate for a few hours at a time on the battlefield, not for long-distance travel. They depend on the efficient Prussian railway system to get them to where they are needed. The interior of a Landfortress is surprisingly open and empty, but all that vacant space is needed to keep the crew from roasting when steam is up.

Subassemblies: Tracks, four turrets.

Propulsion: TL5+ 2000 kW tracked drivetrain.

Weaponry: Four 105mm cannon, five Gatling guns. Twenty rounds each for the main guns, 1000 rounds each for the Gatlings.

Controls: TL5+ mechanical. Crew Stations: Seventeen cramped crew stations and four standing locations.

Occupancy: Short. Passengers: none. Crew: 21 (Commander, Adjutant, Drivetrain Officer, Gunnery Officer, four Main Gunners, five Gatling Gunners, two Stokers, two Engineers, two Ammunition Passers).

Power: 2000-kW TL5+ ruggedized Steam Turbine.

Fuel: 960cf of coal, a 12-hour supply.

Access, Cargo and Waste Space: 196,000cf of empty space inside the hull for access and cooling.

Volume: Body 200,000 cf. (220,000 with front slope), Turrets 1200 each, Tracks 132,000. Surface Area: 25,000 body, turrets 800 each, tracks 20,000.

Structure: TL5+ Heavy Expensive structure.

Hit Points: Body 75,000, Turrets 2400 each, Tracks 30,000 each.

Armor: TL5+ expensive metal armor, PD5 DR90 on the front, PD4 DR60 on the sides and turrets, PD4 DR20 on the top, rear and underside.

Vision: Poor.

Statistics: Empty weight 510 tons. Loaded weight 516 tons. Cost \$692,220.

HT 12.

Ground Performance: Top speed 20mph. gAccel 2mph/s. gDecel 20mph/s. gMR .125. gSR 6. Ground Pressure: Very Low (Off-road speed 16mph).

#### CC Reciprocating Pistols

Reciprocators are a strange clockwork-powered hybrid of revolver and machinegun. The firing mechanism is based on an ordinary .44-caliber revolver, but uses a clockwork motor to spin the cylinder. The result is a high rate of fire — up to 6 shots all at once. The accuracy is terrible

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because of recoil, but with all that lead flying, something is bound to get hit. Combat statistics for reciprocators are given in the weapons table.

### CC Steam Automotive

At present still an expensive status symbol, steam automotives are becoming increasingly common in the great cities of New Europa. They work best on paved streets, but in dry weather one can often come across one flying down a country road. Most of the aristocrats who own them employ a stoker to keep the engine running and maintain the vehicle. Older folk let their coachmen do the driving, but younger automotive owners insist on doing the driving themselves.

Subassemblies: Four standard wheels.

Propulsion: 10kW wheeled drivetrain.

Controls: Mechanical. Crew stations: One crew station.

Occupancy: Short. Passengers: Three. Crew: Driver. Accommodations: Three seats.

Power Plant: TL5+ 10kW steam turbine.

Fuel: Coal bunker holding 2cf of coal (5 hours' endurance).

Cargo Space: 8cf of cargo space (200 lbs).

Volume: Body 140 cf, 3.5cf for each wheel. Surface Area: Body 175cf, wheels 14cf each.

Structure: TL5+ medium structure.

Hit Points: Body 262, wheels 10 each.

Statistics: Empty weight 2820 lbs. Usual payload 1100 lbs. Loaded weight 3920 lbs. Volume 154cf (+3 size modifier). Price \$382. HT 12.

Ground Performance: Speed 22 mph. gAccel 2 mph/s. gDecel 10mph/s. gMR .75. gSR 4. Ground pressure High. Off-road speed 4mph.

### CC Steam Unicycle

The steam unicycle is a popular and inexpensive way to get about in major cities. It can go as fast as a horse, has a good range of operation, and is easy to park and store. Drawbacks include a complete lack of protection from the elements for the driver, a tendency to get stuck in mud, and the fact that it cannot carry a passenger. In some large cities gangs of ruffians have taken to riding about on their unicycles in large groups, terrifying decent folk.

Subassemblies: One standard wheel.

Propulsion: 1kW wheeled drivetrain.

Controls: Mechanical. Crew stations: Cycle crew station.

Occupancy: Short. Passengers: None. Crew: Driver. Accommodations: Cycle seat.

Power Plant: TL5+ 1kW steam turbine. uses .04cf coal per hour

Fuel: Coal bunker holding .04 cf. Two pounds of coal. One hour endurance.

Cargo Space: .96 cf

Volume: Body 4 cf, .4cf for the wheel. Surface Area: Body 16, wheel 4, total 20.

Structure: Standard TL5+. Armor: None.

Hit Points: Body 24, wheel 12.

Statistics: Empty weight 310 lbs. Usual payload 202 lbs. Loaded weight 512 lbs. Volume 4.4cf (+0 size modifier). Price \$43. HT 12.

Ground Performance: Speed 30 mph. gAccel 2 mph/s. gDecel 10mph/s. gMR 1.5. gSR 1. GP high. Off-road speed 5 mph.

#### CC Vane Clippers

Vane clippers are a recent development which promise to challenge steamships for command of the sea. In one respect they are a return to the old days of sail, as they use the wind for power. But unlike windjammers of old, vane clippers are not at the mercy of wind direction and can follow whatever course they like. Instead of sails, a vane clipper mounts several large windmills on deck, which in turn drive an ordinary screw propellor or sidewheels. The first vane clippers connected the windmills directly to the engine drivetrain, but now they store power in a clockwork or flywheel so that the ship can maintain a steady speed despite changes in the wind. The vanes are mounted on pivots so that they can face into the wind regardless of the ship's heading. Consequently vane clippers combine the best features of both sail and steam: unlimited range on one hand and unlimited maneuverability on the other.

Vanes generate .1 kW times the area, times the wind strength (where 0 is a dead calm, 5 is a fresh breeze and 7 is a gale). The vane gear weighs 2 lb. and costs \$1 per square foot. A vane assembly requires a radius of .64ft. times the square root of the area. Ships can mount several vanes — up to two per mast, if there is enough clearance between them (at least the radius of the two vane assemblies). Since the vanes must be free to pivot, they require clearance equal to their radius on all sides.

At present, vane clippers are used only for commercial purposes, as the large and vulnerable vane arrays are unsuitable for warships. Some naval strategists, particularly in France, have suggested building vane cruisers for use as commerce raiders in wartime, but as yet no fleet has adopted the idea.

#### CC The Verne Cannon

The Verne Cannon is a colossal gun, with a bore of nine feet (275cm.). It is a breech-loading rifled cannon with a barrel over a thousand feet long.

It lobs shells weighing 500 tons at targets up to a thousand miles away.

The Verne Cannon can only be used for indirect fire, and so has no 1/2 damage range or accuracy bonus listed. The gun requires up to half an hour to bear on a new target, and is really only useful against stationary objects.

The Verne Cannon's game stats are: Malf: 16, Type: Exp., Dam: 6d x 81,200, Max: 1000 mi., Wt. 4000 tons, RoF 1/3 minutes, WPS 500 tons, VPS 7000cf,

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CPS \$200,000, Loaders 122, Cost \$20,000,000.

### CC Zeppelin Airships

Count Zeppelin's dirigibles have a rigid skeleton of light wood and aluminum, with the gas cells contained within. The skeleton makes it considerably stronger and more agile than a nonrigid gasbag. Zeppelin airships are not intended for long cruises; typical flights last only a few hours. The only armament of a Zeppelin is its rack of heavy bombs, though it would not be hard to convert one to carry Gatling guns or other weapons to use on airborne opponents. Similar designs are also used by the United States, the Aero Pirates of the Caribbean, and the Confederados of Brasil.

Subassemblies: Body, Gondola

Body Features: Very good streamlining on body, Fair on Gondola

Propulsion: 200–kW aerial propellor

Weaponry: Hardpoints for 8 1000–lb. bombs

Instruments: TL5 navigation instruments.

Controls: Mechanical. Crew Stations: Six (pilot, trimman, navigator, bombardier, 2 engineers)

Occupancy: Short. Passengers: None. Crew: Ten. Environmental Systems: none.

Power: TL5+ 200–kW steam turbine

Fuel: 40 cubic feet of coal (5 hours' endurance)

Access, Cargo and Waste Space: 176 cf of access space in gondola.

Volume: Body 600,000cf, Gondola 750cf. Surface Area: Body 50,000sf, Gondola 500 sf.

Structure: Body TL5+ Super–light, Very expensive; Gondola TL5+ Extra–light, expensive.

Surface Features: Sealed.

Hit Points: Body 7500, Gondola 188

Armor: PD2 DR2 TL5+advanced metal armor on gondola.

Statistics: Empty Weight 27,427 lbs. Loaded Weight 40,437 lbs. Volume 600,750cf (size modifier +10). Price: \$253,034. HT 12.

Aerial Performance: Stall Speed 0 (can hover). Amt 500 lbs. Top speed 19mph. aAccel 1mph/s. aMR .125. aSR 4. aDecel .5.

### BB Weapon Statistics

Weapon Malf Type Dam 1/2D Max Acc Wt SS RoF

Shots Rcl ST Cost

Colt Navy Revolver 16 cr. 2d–1 120 1300 2 2.5

9 1 6 –1 10 \$15

Derringer crit. cr. 1d 80 650 1 .5 11

1 2 –1 9 \$10

Enfield Rifle 16 cr. 4d 700 2100 8 8.5 15

1/15 1 –2 10 \$15

Gatling Gun 16 cr. 5d 700 2100 4 380 –

Skill/2 100 -1 - \$20

Hotchkiss Rotary Cannon 16 cr 10d 700 2100 4 400

- skill/2 100 -1 - \$50

Martini-Henry Breechloader crit. cr. 5d 600 2030 7

6.5 15 1/4 1 -2 10 \$20

Reciprocator 14 cr. 2d-3 70 1070 0 7 lbs. 10

6 6 -1 10 \$30



## 5 Chapter 9. Falkenstein Campaigns

### 5.1 Tone and Style

While *GURPS Castle Falkenstein* is a setting designed for fantastic adventures and heroic action, there are some variations in tone and style possible. Campaigns can emphasize heroic action, intrigue, social struggle, or suspense. Depending on the preferences of the players and the Gamemaster, you can combine styles to choose the tone that best suits the adventures you want to create.

#### 5.1.1 Swashbuckling Adventure

Above all, the Castle Falkenstein world is exciting. Gentlemen don't settle disputes by hiring lawyers or complaining, they resort to cold steel or pistols at ten paces. The fates of nations really are decided by daring spies climbing into remote castles in the dead of night, or by desperate fights atop speeding railway trains.

Obviously a *GURPS Castle Falkenstein* campaign should have action, and plenty of it. Gamemasters should be sure to give their player characters lots of opportunities to be heroic. Even if the campaign centers on science and invention, or magickal intrigue, there is still plenty of room for derring-do. Inventions can go awry and spells can backfire, after all.

However, action isn't always the same as violence. A game doesn't have to be an unending series of brawls in order to be exciting. There can still be plenty of action and excitement even if the characters never strike a blow or fire a shot in anger. Dangling from a runaway dirigible, scaling the face of an ice cliff, or riding a raft down a raging river are all exciting and dangerous, but don't involve conflict.

In an action-oriented campaign, plots are unlikely to be complex or multilayered. If a noblewoman needs someone to steal back the compromising letters from a horrid blackmailer, the problems faced by the player characters are things like guards, locked gates and deathtraps. They can assume the noblewoman is real and the blackmailer is really horrid. The emphasis is on doing things rather than on discovering things or character interaction. Pacing and maintaining the excitement are the Gamemaster's chief tasks (see the sidebar "Making it Exciting" for suggestions).

#### 5.1.2 Making It Exciting

*GURPS Castle Falkenstein* adventures should emphasize adventure and excitement. Gamemasters looking for ways to pump some adrenaline into



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their gaming sessions may be interested in the following tips.

### 5.1.2.1 Stay Focused

If everyone including the Gamemaster keeps digressing to talk about movies or cool Web sites, it's hard to become immersed in the moment. If players like to chat, spend a few minutes gabbing before starting to play.

### 5.1.2.2 Be Prepared

It's always easier to come up with cool ideas when you have time to think, rather than on the fly in the middle of a game session. When designing an adventure, try to note down possible "action opportunities" for use during play. This will also let you fine-tune the adventure to allow for more exciting events.

### 5.1.2.3 Surprise Them

In great action films, one thing that drives the plot is that the heroes have to cope with a nonstop series of perils and threats. No sooner have they survived one than another crops up. A good game session can have the same feel if the Gamemaster keeps piling on the dangers. The characters escape the castle but are pursued by Cossacks. They lose the Cossacks in a forest but disturb a pack of werewolves. They cross a frozen river to get away from the werewolves but the ice breaks just as the Cossacks catch up again, and so on. It's best if the dangers get worse each time, so that the characters are constantly leaping from the frying pan to the fire.

### 5.1.2.4 Skip the Boring Parts

Often Gamemasters don't know when to cut away to the next scene. If the characters have just dispatched the maniac lurking beneath the Paris Opera, it really isn't necessary to play out the police debriefing afterwards. Just say "After your wounds are tended and the police have asked their questions, you stagger home to bed. But next morning. . ." And they're off again.

### 5.1.2.5 Make Snap Decisions

In GURPS, resolving combat or tricky stunts sometimes requires a lot of die rolling. If the action grinds to a halt while the Gamemaster has to look up two or three different tables, the players may lose interest. So don't. Make a snap decision. If you say that the die roll penalty for

firing a pocket Gatling gun while swinging through a window is –4, then that's what it is. Roll the dice and keep moving. (Of course it helps if you're familiar with the rules and have a good idea of what kind of modifiers are appropriate, but don't sweat it if you're not.)

#### 5.1.2.6 Set the Stage

Music helps a great deal. For Victorian adventure sessions, a few movie soundtrack discs can provide perfect background music. If you really want to get ambitious, create a "playlist" of tracks appropriate to certain scenes, so you can play the creepy music when the characters go into the catacombs, the fast music when they're chasing the villains across Siberia, and the heroic music when they battle the Unseelie. Actual period music can be good, too — Strauss waltzes for a fancy ball scene, or some Wagner when you want grandeur.

#### 5.1.3 Glittering Intrigue

The flip side of action is intrigue. Sometimes a chance remark overheard or a secret "accidentally" revealed can be as effective as a gunfight. The Castle Falkenstein world is full of conspiracies, plots and secrets. Players who enjoy roleplaying and devising their own plots and counterplots can have a ball as they match wits with evil masterminds, the Iron Chancellor, or the forces of the Unseelie.

Intrigues can range from personal to international in scope, and can be as light-hearted as a romance or as deadly serious as the Adversary's attempts to destroy humanity. Often what seems at first glance to be a minor plot turns out to be part of a much bigger and more sinister operation.

Since intrigues and conspiracies are by definition secret, getting the player characters involved can be tricky. If the characters are agents of some police or intelligence agency, their superiors can hand them a few patchy clues ("men died to get these papers out of Constantinople") and send them off. But for other characters a little creativity may be required. One effective ploy is the Beautiful Girl In Danger. She appears on one character's doorstep in the dead of night, or begs for his help in a railway train compartment, or simply bumps into him while fleeing a band of sinister assailants. No gentleman worthy of the name would hesitate to help a damsel in distress. (Turnabout is fair play, of course: what Adventuress could possibly refuse to help a gentleman in distress, especially if he's charming and handsome?)

Another method, which Alfred Hitchcock used in a number of superb movies, is the Cryptic Dying Message. A dying man staggers into the character's flat, mutters something and drops dead. Soon Sinister Forces

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are on the character's trail — they know that he knows something, even though he doesn't know what it is!

Hitchcock also liked to use the Mistaken Identity gimmick, although its roots go back to Shakespeare. One of the characters just happens to look like someone involved in a secret plot, and is unwittingly the recipient of a message or attack meant for his double. Again, the characters must stay one step ahead of the bad guys while at the same time trying to figure out what's going on.

Once the characters are involved, they must unravel the plot and survive various attempts to silence, kidnap or kill them by the plotters. If possible, the Gamemaster should come up with a good reason to keep them from simply going to the police and letting the authorities handle it. Perhaps They have already infiltrated the police, or maybe They have framed the characters for a crime. Or perhaps the whole thing is just too fantastic for anyone to believe (which in the world of Castle Falkenstein would require it to be very fantastic indeed).

While an intrigue adventure can have plenty of action — narrow escapes, deadly assassins and so forth — the heart of it is the battle of wits between the heroes and the villains. Paranoia and betrayal can play a big part, as it turns out the helpful police inspector is really Their agent, or that ordinary beggar on the corner is one of Their spies. Conversely, Mr. Big's bodyguard may actually be an agent of the Special Police Corps in disguise, ready to help when all seems lost.

In a campaign which centers on intrigue the Gamemaster may want to keep several plotlines going at once, just to make things more complex. If the characters are engaged in thwarting the schemes of Baron Maupertuis as he tries to manipulate the financial markets of Europe, they might not notice the clues pointing to a Prussian attempt to replace Napoleon III with a clockwork double until it's almost too late.

### 5.1.4 A Good Villain Is Hard To Find

Nothing makes for a memorable adventure more than a good opponent. Just think of all the great villains of fiction and film — Darth Vader, Harry Lime, Long John Silver, The Wicked Witch of the West — they're much more memorable than the heroes they faced! When creating a *GURPS Castle Falkenstein* adventure, try to make your villains interesting and memorable. The attributes of a good villain include:

#### 5.1.4.1 Competence

A bumbling villain is just comic relief. A villain who's just as smart and resourceful as any of the heroes is scary. This doesn't mean you have to make all your villains into 500–point monster characters, just that

you should play them as intelligently as possible. They won't make stupid mistakes or be fooled by a feeble trick, and their plans will include contingency alternatives and backup strategies. When the heroes do manage to defeat them, the players can feel that they really have accomplished something.

### **5.1.4.2 Humanity**

Often a streak of humanity or sympathy makes a villain great. A bad guy who keeps his word, or who loves his family, or maybe just has a sense of humor, is much more interesting than one who is just an evil automaton. Some villains are actually misguided idealists, whose evil schemes serve a good cause. Give your villains colorful personalities, maybe even make them people the heroes might have been friends with under different circumstances, and you can be sure they won't be forgotten.

### **5.1.4.3 Romance**

An especially good way to make a villain human and create some genuine dilemmas for the heroes is to create a romance between the Bad Guy and one of the Good Guys. Master Villains or Villainesses may well develop a crush on a suitably attractive and competent heroine or hero. This can either be an unrequited love on the part of the villain, but the player of the PC in question may decide that the character is interested, as well (villains are charismatic, and a touch of evil is sexy, after all). The romantic adversaries can remain friendly foes, or possibly True Love can make the villain reform.

### **5.1.4.4 Survivability**

Above all, a good villain comes back for the sequel. Nobody likes a quitter. Villains who get away or return from the dead can build up a real relationship with the heroes over time. There's always a secret door in the hideout so the villain can get out before the explosion, and even if the heroes have riddled him with bullets, a villain can come back somehow (it was a double they killed, he's been reanimated by magic or science, he travelled in time, his henchmen saved his brain, or he had on a bulletproof vest under his coat). This can be overdone, of course: if the players begin to suspect that the bad guys never die, they get frustrated, but one or two return engagements for opponents who really gave the heroes a run for their money will probably go over well.

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### 5.1.4.5 Style

If you're going to be bad, at least be classy about it. A proper villain doesn't pinch pennies or cut corners in his grand schemes. Why boss your minions from behind an ordinary desk when you can issue your commands from a gold throne? Why shoot someone when you can lower them slowly into the pit of flesh-eating ants? Why rob jewelry stores when you can go after the Crown Jewels of Russia? Villains should always have ambitious goals, and should go after them in the grand manner.

### 5.1.5 Steampunk

The Steampunk genre is a branch of science fiction which attempts to do for Victorian scientific romances what the Cyberpunk writers did for hard science fiction. It uses all the steam-powered gadgets and Marvels of Science, but looks at them from the perspective of the underbelly of society. How do the excluded and the oppressed make use of these new technologies?

Characters in steampunk adventures are unlikely to be "proper folk." Instead they are anarchists, demimondaines, spies, criminals and perhaps a few decadent aristocrats cut off from polite society because of flagrant immorality. Sometimes ordinary citizens get swept up in steampunk scenarios by mistake or by happenstance. Survival in a dangerous world is a paramount concern, but they can also try to master and make use of new technologies for their own purposes. The natural habitat of steampunk characters is the great industrial cities, London in particular. They can be any nationality, as all the big cities of the era were full of exiles and immigrants.

The presence of magick doesn't alter a steampunk adventure very much because the tone and the style are as important as the gadgetry. Characters are striving to maintain a little individual identity and honor in the face of vast impersonal forces, and it doesn't really matter much if those forces are cybernetic, steam-powered or supernatural.

A typical steampunk adventure involves a group of marginal characters who become involved in the machinations of the powerful. They learn something they shouldn't have, or come into possession of something important, or perhaps are hired as disposable operatives. But perhaps the characters can not only survive but win back a little for themselves, if they're clever and ruthless enough.

The seminal steampunk novel is Gibson and Sterling's *The Difference Engine*; other important books in the genre include James Blaylock's *Homonculus* and K.W. Jeter's *Infernal Devices*. *Paris in the Year 2000* by Jules Verne is a recently rediscovered work by the father of science fiction which is essentially a steampunk novel.

### 5.1.6 The Upper Crust

If the Gamemaster and the players are sufficiently well-versed in history, one fun campaign can simply involve the life and adventures of a group of wealthy upper-class characters. The Victorian era was a Golden Age if you were sufficiently rich and well-connected. Characters can have plenty of adventures just going to balls and house-parties, playing tourist in New Europa or more exotic places, and engaging in the chief upper-class amusements of hunting, gambling and romance.

Upper-class characters are certain to have some servants, so it is always possible for one player to run the employer and another play his employee. Depending on the characters, the two can be partners in adversity like Phileas Fogg and his man Passepartout, or a helpless upper-class twit and his resourceful manservant, as in the immortal Jeeves novels by P.G. Wodehouse.

If the various mundane adventures grow tiresome, the Gamemaster can always spice things up with various perils, and maybe get the idle nobility involved in an Unseelie or Prussian plot. Who knows? Maybe the characters will decide to use their wealth and connections to do some good!

### 5.1.7 The Wild West

The Western is of course an entire genre unto itself, but Castle Falkenstein gamemasters can always send their characters to the frontier for a little cowboy action. The big difference in the Falkenstein universe is that the Native American nations of the Great Plains have so far been able to keep the whites out of the heart of North America. But the Republic of Texas and the Bear Flag Empire of California have enough wide-open spaces and cowboys for an entire Western campaign.

It's worth noting that historically a great many European aristocrats owned cattle ranches or went on hunting trips in the American West. So even if the characters in a Falkenstein campaign are a group of Bavarian officers and Parisian adventuresses, a jaunt to Texas or California wouldn't be that unusual. Or the gamemaster can turn things around, and confront his New European player characters with a band of wild Texans in the heart of Vienna on some vital mission.

Many of the elements of Western adventures are present in other parts of the world. British settlers in Australia are in a similarly remote, dusty, bandit-plagued environment. Colonialists in India and Africa have to worry about hostile tribes. It's even possible to set Western-style adventures in the "Wild East" of Russian Siberia and Central Asia, where the Cossacks come riding to the rescue when bandits raid remote villages. Essential elements of a Western include shootouts at high noon, stagecoaches chased by bandits or Indians, villains after land or water

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rights, hidden treasures, cavalry riding to the rescue, fallen women with hearts of gold, revenge, poker games, and footloose cowpokes who'll do what's right. In the Falkenstein world one can add weird inventions, sinister magick, cowboys who really do sing, and the complicated international relations among the United States, Texas, California and the Indian nations. The *Castle Falkenstein* sourcebook *Six-Guns and Sorcery* is a very complete and detailed look at the Wild West in the world of Castle Falkenstein.

### 5.1.8 Gaslit Horror

Horror fiction is essentially a product of the Nineteenth Century.

The three foundations of the genre — *Frankenstein*, *Dr.*

*Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and *Dracula* — span the century. In many

ways the era was perfect for tales of horror. Science and technology had advanced to the point where humans could easily go out and meddle with Things Man Was Not Meant To Know, but not so far that the forces of order could easily annihilate any unnatural menaces. This is especially true in the Castle Falkenstein setting, where magic is a potent force and things like vampires and banshees really do exist.

Horror-oriented campaigns can be structured in several ways. One possibility is that the player characters are some sort of occult investigators who get called in whenever a case has supernatural elements, à la *The X-Files*. Or perhaps they simply "happen" to blunder into horror situations in the course of more conventional adventuring. The problem with any campaign of this sort is that the players will be expecting the "monster of the week," which makes it harder to establish a very scary mood.

One way is to mix horror adventures into a campaign with other elements. Sometimes the heroes face Prussian agents, sometimes they face Elder Horrors. This keeps the suspense level up, although it often means the players aren't nearly as worried about the Prussians once they've faced the Horrors.

Gamemasters who really want to scare their players should run horror adventures without letting anyone know ahead of time. The players (and their characters) think it's a normal adventure story — until Bad Things start happening. Perhaps the best approach is to run each horror adventure as a one-shot, in order to follow the great rule of horror films laid down by Joe Bob Briggs: "Anyone can die at any time."

Aside from the novels listed above (and their numerous film adaptations), other important horror books and movies for the Victorian era include Kim Newman's *Anno Dracula*, the film *The Mummy* (both the original and the recent remake), *Mad Love* (also known as *The Hands of Orlac*), and everything H.P. Lovecraft ever wrote.

### 5.1.9 Satire and Comedy

The Victorian era lends itself almost too well to satire. There's almost no end of things to make fun of. Big fat stationary targets include Colonel Blimpish military men, dimwitted aristocrats, middle-class prudes, lower-class criminals, crazed inventors, doomed explorers, strident suffragettes, and fanatical anarchists.

The tone can be as gentle as a Gilbert and Sullivan opera or as savage as a play by Shaw or Wilde. Two useful rules apply for creating comic roleplaying scenarios. The first is *Overdo It* — exaggeration is the key to many great comedies. In Jerome K. Jerome's hilarious *Three Men in a Boat*, George doesn't just get lost in the Hampton Court maze, he gets dozens of other people lost with him and even manages to get the guide lost! One man getting lost in a maze is merely a bother for him and a bore to hear about afterwards, but a dozen people including the guide getting lost is funny.

The second one is *Don't Overdo It*, which would seem to contradict the first but is actually complementary. Jokes are not dead horses, and can't take too much beating. If something is funny once, accept the smiles and laughter and do something else the next time. Humor is ultimately based on surprise; we laugh at something which is contrary to what we would expect. If the audience can see the joke coming like a slow freight crossing the prairies, it's not funny.

Of course, it's all too easy for gamers in the enlightened present to make fun of the poor fools who were stupid enough to be born in the wrong century. Clever gamemasters can use their roleplaying adventures to satirize modern idiocies, as well. Bothered by Internet spammers sending junk email? How about a Steam Age equivalent using the pneumatic mail-tube network to send actual samples of his patent potted meat to unwilling consumers? If "Gothic" teenagers in vampire garb strike you as funny, bring on their Victorian ancestors, endlessly pestering poor Count Dracula. Suggested readings for a comic or satiric campaign include just about everything by P.G. Wodehouse, Gilbert and Sullivan, Oscar Wilde, Saki and Jerome K. Jerome.

### 5.1.10 School Days

Education in the Nineteenth Century, especially in Britain, was strict, to put it mildly. Ironically, the schooling of the upper classes was probably the most nightmarish, as their children were shipped off to boarding school as young as six years old, and there endured the tender mercies of masters and older students for more than a decade. After that kind of hardening, coping with hostile Pathans in India or facing Unseelie horrors would be nothing by comparison.



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Gamemasters can run an entire campaign set at an English boarding school. There is a vast canon of (mostly awful) boy's novels of school life which can be mined for ideas. Schoolchildren are obviously going to have fairly low point totals, and certainly will have the Youth disadvantage.

Adventures can be fairly mundane, with children coping with inter-House rivalries, pranks on the masters and winning the Big Cricket Match. Or child characters could get involved with spies or master villains, in the grand tradition of Saturday morning cartoons.

Given the prevalence of magick in the Castle Falkenstein universe, it seems likely that there are schools which specialize in training children with signs of sorcerous talent. Kids at such a school, still learning to use enormous powers they can't really control, can get into all sorts of interesting trouble. Fans of the Harry Potter novels can have fun with their own schoolboy sorcerer adventures.

Child characters aren't limited to boarding school settings, of course. Players can run characters who are siblings in a typically large Victorian family, getting into scrapes and adventures together. This also gives players the opportunity to run characters from the middle and lower classes, who wouldn't normally go to boarding school.

Fictional sources for school campaigns include *Tom Brown's Schooldays* by Thomas Hughes, *Stalky Co.* by Kipling, and *Nicholas Nickleby* by Dickens. Nearly all of E. Nesbit's books involve children getting involved with magic and the supernatural, and are excellent for kids and grownups.

### 5.1.11 Silly Campaigns

In a silly campaign all pretense of realism goes completely out of the window. Everything and everyone is totally absurd. This sort of thing works better in a short-term campaign or a standalone adventure, as it's difficult to keep up the right level of manic inventiveness for months at a time.

Some silly elements appropriate to Castle Falkenstein include:

#### 5.1.11.1 Stereotypes

Every nationality has its characteristic stereotype. Americans are pushy, chew tobacco, and are usually worth millions; Englishmen are prudish, class-conscious and fanatical about cricket; Frenchmen are lecherous, overly proud and obsessive about food; Germans are boring, regimented and overfed; and so on. (Some stereotypes about minorities are less attractive.) Players should be sure to play their stereotypes to the hilt.

### 5.1.11.2 Fainting

Ladies faint. All the time. Not just when a Fright Check is called for, not merely in tense situations, but all the time. Keep the smelling salts handy.

### 5.1.11.3 Prudery

Victorians were reticent about certain things. Play it up. Don't mention certain features of anatomy except with elaborate euphemisms. Don't talk about bodily functions. Don't even mention reproduction. And don't use any terms which might be interpreted as being some kind of veiled reference to the above matters. The goal should be to make communication next to impossible.

### 5.1.11.4 Stiff Upper Lips

Characters in Victorian fiction all have complete self-control. They don't just have the Unfazeable advantage, they also seem to lack sensory nerve endings. Characters should maintain a stiff upper lip in all circumstances. ("Sorry to trouble you, old chap, but I seem to have this spear sticking in my chest. Wonder if you wouldn't mind having a look?")

## 5.2 Some Campaign Ideas

The following campaign ideas focus more on what the characters are likely to be doing. The tone can vary widely using the ideas noted above. These are by no means the only campaigns possible, but do provide a useful framework for adventures.

### 5.2.1 Agents of the Second Compact

This campaign assumes the player characters are either members of the Second Compact or else agents of a patron NPC who is. As agents they are likely to have most of their adventures handed to them from above, which is convenient for the Gamemaster but doesn't leave much room for the players to take the initiative.

A great many character types are possible, as the Second Compact includes dragons, faeries and dwarfs as well as humans in a wide range of careers. Characters can be soldiers, secret agents, detectives, magicians, scientists, adventuresses or very nearly anything else. Characters who are actually members of the Second Compact may take the organization as a Patron or an Ally Group, though in either case the Compact's resources and reach are limited. All should have a Duty either to the Second Compact or

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to a Patron who is a member of the Compact. Unless the player characters have personally done something to thwart the plans of Bismarck or the Unseelie, there is no need to take them as Enemies.

As agents of the Second Compact, characters may travel just about anywhere to deal with the plots of Prussia and the Adversary, or else to line up new allies in the struggle. Since the Compact's intelligence-gathering resources are limited, a lot of this consists of wandering about poking one's nose into things, which means Compact agents may well find themselves in trouble that has nothing to do with the Unseelie at all.

A Second Compact campaign works best as adventure or intrigue, though the Unseelie can certainly add a note of horror as well. Gritty steampunk doesn't really fit well, although characters might start out as outcasts who become involved in the ongoing struggle and decide to sign on with the good guys.

### 5.2.2 On Her Majesty's Secret Service

The Second Compact and the Unseelie aren't the only people in the Castle Falkenstein world with secret agents. Nearly every national government has its own spies or secret police, and any of them can make a good background for a campaign. In the United States, the Secret Service handles what little intelligence and counterintelligence is needed. Bavaria has the Bavarian Secret Service, which works closely with the Second Compact. Great Britain has three separate secret services: the Foreign Office has a Secret Service Fund, which pays for "freelance" agents hired for specific jobs; the War Office Topographical and Statistical Department is the primary military intelligence agency; and the Governor-General of Ireland has a Secret Service Department devoted to monitoring signs of rebel activity among the Irish.

Most secret services are devoted to gathering information on the military and diplomatic plans of foreign powers, and to preventing enemy agents from learning the same about the home country. In more repressive states, secret services also keep tabs on domestic dissidents and foes of the regime — sometimes they make them disappear.

Missions for secret agents include intelligence-gathering, counterintelligence, recruitment and special operations.

Intelligence-gathering is the basis of all espionage, and involves getting copies of war plans or secret treaties, and photographing or stealing codes and secret weapons. Counterintelligence means trying to catch or mislead enemy spies. Recruitment is the process of getting new agents in the enemy country. This can be done by making contact with dissident groups or finding officials vulnerable to bribery or blackmail. Of course, any recruit may really be a double agent.

But special operations are the fun part of being a secret agent. That is when the spies can use all their clever concealed gadgets as they infiltrate the hidden lair of an Evil Mastermind to foil his grand scheme, or smuggle a brilliant scientist out of a heavily-guarded Prussian fortress. Fictional references for espionage adventures are numerous; the James Bond movies and the *Wild Wild West* television series best capture the tone of Falkensteinian secret agent exploits.

### 5.2.3 Beyond the Faerie Veil

As described elsewhere, the realm of the Faerie is a place without form, its only reality imposed by the willpower of its inhabitants. The Seelie and the Unseelie have built their Courts there, creating literal Fairylands where almost anything is possible.

Faerie characters (and their human allies) can venture into the realm of Faerie through magickal gateways in search of adventure. Depending on the tone of the campaign, stories set in Faerie can be anything from intrigue and romance among the Seelie Court, daring rescues of mortals held captive by the Unseelie, or simple struggles to survive in the chaotic and mutable realm.

Mortals in Faerie must either be very brave and capable or else very lucky. Even the relatively benign Seelie tend to treat humans as little better than playthings, and the Unseelie . . . break their toys. With a guarantee of safe conduct from one of the high lords of the Seelie, a human might be able to get by in Seelie territory, but in the Unseelie realm even other Faerie are in danger.

The realm of Faerie has portals to numerous other worlds in addition to the universe of *GURPS Castle Falkenstein*. A party of characters can travel through those gateways, either on purpose or by accident. Perhaps the Second Compact needs some high-tech gadgetry from our own world — or perhaps Compact agents have to prevent the Unseelie from acquiring futuristic firepower in a starfaring setting. By the same mechanism, characters from other campaign worlds can blunder through Faerie just as Tom Olam did, and find a place in the Falkenstein world. (See the sidebar on "Other *GURPS* Worlds" for crossover ideas.)

### 5.2.4 Time Travel

There are several ways to travel in time available to characters in the Castle Falkenstein universe. Scientists can build time machines or time gateways, sorcerers can create spells to move through dimensions, and the Faerie Veil opens pathways to other times and worlds.

A campaign that centers on characters constantly jaunting about through the timelines isn't really a *GURPS Castle Falkenstein*

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campaign at all, but a *GURPS Time Travel* campaign with some interesting backstory. That doesn't mean you can't have time travel adventures in your campaign, though.

Agents of the Second Compact (or other right-thinking folk) might have to go back in time to prevent the Unseelie or the Prussians or a Criminal Mastermind from changing history. Scientific adventurers may build their own time machine and go exploring. Or perhaps time travellers from another era may decide to visit the Steam Age.

Gamemasters running a time travel adventure should decide for themselves if history can be changed by the actions of time travellers, and if so how much and how easily. *GURPS Time Travel* provides excellent information on how to devise rules of time travel that work best for the adventures you want to run.

### 5.2.5 Other GURPS Worlds

Travel through the Faerie Veil makes it possible to reach other universes, including some described in other *GURPS* books. Some particularly interesting crossovers include:

#### 5.2.5.1 GURPS Alternate Earths and Alternate Earths 2

For any adventurers who want to wander the time streams, these two books provide a dozen fully-realized alternate worlds. Some, like Dixie in *Alternate Earths* and Cornwallis or Ming-3 in *Alternate Earths 2*, could be the product of time meddling by a master villain.

#### 5.2.5.2 GURPS Arabian Nights

If the characters are going to spend any amount of time in the Muslim lands, this book has lots of useful information about Islamic culture and society, plus plenty of magical beasts and items from the Arabian Nights.

#### 5.2.5.3 GURPS Atomic Horror

Though the period is very different, *GURPS Atomic Horror* has lots of useful information about super-scientific menaces, low-tech space travel and sinister conspiracies. The world of Castle Falkenstein may look a lot like *GURPS Atomic Horror* after a century or so.

#### 5.2.5.4 GURPS Aztecs

The bloodthirsty Aztec priesthood have been suppressed in the world of *Castle Falkenstein*. Mind you, everyone in the magickal world thought that they were dead and gone *before* that nasty business of a few years back, and groups like the Sons of the Dog claim to have secrets of Aztec magic. Aztecs also are good candidates for the inhabitants of a Lost World, especially one in Latin America or the Caribbean.

#### 5.2.5.5 GURPS Dinosaurs

Whether you're venturing into a lost world, thawing out a slab of polar ice, or simply fooling around with the fabric of time itself, you're going to run into dinosaurs sooner or later. *GURPS Dinosaurs* has pages and pages of prehistoric critters, just right to chase our heroes around a tropical island or rampage through the heart of Paris. Note that many of the dinosaurs in *GURPS Dinosaurs* were unknown to Victorian-era science, so characters encountering Velociraptors should be properly astonished.

#### 5.2.5.6 GURPS Goblins

Besides being great fun, *GURPS Goblins* contains a great deal of background material on early Victorian London and life among the dregs of society. The really appalling thing is that most of the squalid details are taken from actual history! Indispensable for any campaign involving criminals and the lower classes. Alternatively, Goblin London may actually exist within the Faerie Veil, as a little realm created by some not-too-bright Lesser Faerie based on their impressions of Georgian London.

#### 5.2.5.7 GURPS High-Tech, GURPS Steampunk and GURPS Vehicles

These three works are very useful references for those wishing to delve into the real nitty-gritty of Falkensteinian technology. Chapter 7 has notes on Tech Levels and available technology. *High-Tech* includes lots of nineteenth-century gear which fits right into a *GURPS Castle Falkenstein* campaign.

#### 5.2.5.8 GURPS Horror

Besides being an excellent sourcebook for creating horror adventures in any genre, *Horror* has a section of useful information on Victorian London, which could be very handy in a London-based *Falkenstein* campaign.

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### 5.2.5.9 GURPS Illuminati

The Bavarian Illuminati are an important organization in the Castle Falkenstein world, and shadowy conspiracies and counter-conspiracies are a fact of life. *GURPS Illuminati* has plenty of useful information for gamemasters who want to run campaigns with lots of intrigue and paranoia. Of course, given that the Illuminati and the Templars are publicly-known groups, who are the real Secret Masters?

### 5.2.5.10 GURPS Martial Arts and GURPS Swashbucklers

Players who want to create masters of swordplay and explore the arcana of different fighting schools may enjoy the detailed fencing rules in these two books. *Martial Arts* can also be useful if the Gamemaster wants to pit his New European player characters against ninja, samurai and masters of kung fu in the Mysterious East.

### 5.2.5.11 GURPS Places of Mystery

Many of the locations described in this book make perfect locales for heroic steam age adventures. Magicians may need to cast critical spells at these key locations, or else foil attempts by evil sorcerers to do the same. Criminal masterminds may actually use some of the more out-of-the-way sites as hidden bases. And even archaeologists of the Nineteenth Century weren't above a little treasure-hunting.

### 5.2.5.12 GURPS Planet Krishna

Just change the names a little and this book makes a good resource for adventures on Mars (or perhaps the moons of Jupiter). The frequent nudity of Krishnans is likely to lead to some very interesting situations for a bunch of Victorian explorers, especially in a mixed party.

### 5.2.5.13 GURPS Technomancer

The combination of high sorcery and high-tech makes the Technomancer setting very much like the Falkenstein universe more than a hundred years in the future. Sorcerers from either universe might breach the Faerie Veil and travel through. The contrast between the wildly romantic nature of the Falkenstein world and the practical, rationalistic tone of Technomancer could make for some interesting conflicts. If the Unseelie are aware of this world, they may have their own plots underway to conquer or destroy it, as otherwise it could provide powerful allies for the mortals of New Europa.

#### 5.2.5.14 GURPS Time Travel

This can come in handy two ways: if a group of Falkenstein characters decide to go time–voyaging, *GURPS Time Travel* is a good guide for gamemasters wrestling with the question of paradoxes and changing the past. Alternatively, the Falkenstein universe could be plugged neatly into the Infinity Unlimited setting as a parallel Earth with some stranger than usual natural laws.

In that case, either the quirks of Infinity Unlimited's technology has kept them blissfully unaware of the nature of the inter–universal space through which they pass instantly (the Faerie Veil), or else the Veil is itself another alternate universe with laws that allow easy parachronic travel without any technology at all.

Once Infinity discovers the world they will code–name *Falkenstein*, they will probably wish to keep it secret — there are too many dangerous variables here — but if word leaks out, it will likely be impossible to ban Time Tours from running trips there from Victorian–wannabees and fantasy fans, with ensuing massive headaches. The discovery of not one but two factions with inter–universal travel (the Seelie and Unseelie), along with magicians with similar powers, is close to Infinity's worst nightmare; the only relief is that magic and faerie power seem severely restricted in their range of worlds accessible. Once the threat of the Unseelie is fully understood, an alliance with the Second Compact will seem very attractive, and to blazes with the risk of giving the Seelie too much knowledge.

Falkenstein is probably on a Quantum level inaccessible to Centrum; if not, Centrum's rationalist distaste for magic will quite likely lead them to ignore it anyway. However, if they do intervene, their instinct will be to support the Steam Lords and American Freemasonry in the quest to construct a rational, English–speaking world government. They could well logically end up allying with Infinity against the Unseelie, but they are dangerously inexperienced in negotiation with highly experienced, very inimical politician–manipulators, and the Adversary might hide his contempt well enough to bluff them into alliance. An Unseelie–Centrum alliance should cause Infinity to hit the panic button — hard.

#### 5.2.6 Consulting Detectives

The Nineteenth Century saw the birth of the detective as a profession, and more importantly saw the birth of the detective novel as a literary genre. While Wilkie Collins's *Sergeant Cuff* and Edgar Allan Poe's *Chevalier Dupin* were first, the giant among Victorian detectives is Sherlock Holmes. In the Falkenstein universe, Mr. Holmes is a real person, and so is his arch–nemesis Professor Moriarty! Player character detectives



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can apply their powers of observation and deduction to solving all manner of crimes.

Characters can be either freelance "Consulting Detectives" like Holmes or Dupin, or else police investigators like Cuff. Detectives who work for a large agency like the Pinkertons fall somewhere in between the two. Naturally, detectives can have loyal sidekicks, assistants, and partners in battling crime. There's certainly no reason why a detective even has to be human; a Dwarf or one of the Faerie might specialize in crimes that smack of the supernatural.

Gamemasters running a detective campaign must come up with puzzles to challenge the wits of the players. Fortunately there are thousands of stories and films to crib from when your own imagination fails. (Just be sure not to use something the players will recognize.)

The presence of magick can complicate the science of detection. A magician can commit "impossible" crimes and confound the deductions of even the most observant detective; conversely a spell-using detective can use magick to cut through even the most puzzling mystery. The solution is to match the crime to the detective — a mundane sleuth gets mundane crimes and a sorcerous detective gets supernatural ones.

Depending on the tone, the detectives can solve knotty puzzles with a minimum of physical danger, or else the focus can be on chasing the bad guys and getting into their secret hideouts to bring them to justice.

Criminals can be "ordinary" crooks, Criminal Masterminds, or even horrifying supernatural entities. For a darker steampunk feel, the bad guys may have connections to the highest levels of society, and a good detective has to risk his career for justice.

Fictional sources for detective adventures are legion. Sherlock

Holmes is the best-known Victorian detective, and G.K. Chesterton's Father Brown stories contain some ingenious puzzles. Randall Garrett's Lord Darcy series chronicles the exploits of a detective in a world of magic very much like the Falkenstein universe.

### 5.2.7 Explorers of the Unknown

The Victorian era was the last great age of exploration. Advances in transportation and equipment made it possible for explorers to venture into the remaining blank spots on the map. The deep jungles of Africa and South America, the inaccessible peaks of Tibet, and the North and South Poles all attracted explorers in the Nineteenth Century. Amazing steampunk inventions can add other possibilities: the ocean depths, the interior of the Earth, or interplanetary space! Or with the aid of magic a band of explorers might venture into worlds beyond the Faerie Veil.

Just about anyone can turn up on an expedition into the unknown.

While ex-military men and scientists make the best explorers, thereis

plenty of room for eccentric aristocrats, adventuresome ladies, comic lower-class individuals, mysterious foreigners and natives of appropriate hue. Magicians or Faerie folk could be added to the mix just as easily.

Journeys of exploration generally have three main parts: getting there, seeing the sights, and getting home again. Getting there is likely to be difficult and dangerous, but not impossible — even though all previous attempts have failed, the adventurers will almost certainly make it, otherwise there isn't much point in setting out.

Seeing the sights is usually where things go wrong. Explorers almost never find what they expect. Abandoned cities turn out to be inhabited; isolated valleys have strange beings living in them; even the polar wastes may conceal a villain's hidden lair or a lost civilization. How the locals react to a party of intrepid explorers is a key element: are they immediately hostile? Do they take the strangers for gods? Do they need help against some ancient foe? Or are they only pretending to be friendly? The unexplored regions of the world do seem to contain an astonishing number of attractive young women in need of rescue, either from dangerous animals, political opponents or sacrificial religions.

Depending on the situation, the explorers may stay a while or else go directly to the question of getting home again. Sometimes getting home requires repairs to the party's amazing scientific vehicle, or may oblige the explorers to escape captivity and defeat hostile forces. Often the explorers get out just before some catastrophe makes further visits impossible: the volcano blows up, the interdimensional rift closes, or the cave collapses.

### 5.2.8 Outer Space Adventures

Space is of course the final frontier. While in our world getting to the Moon took billions of dollars and a decade of work, building a spaceship is child's play for most New European inventors.

Victorian interplanetary expeditions usually confine themselves to the nearer worlds — the Moon, Mars and Venus. Explorers on the Moon often find vast caverns and underground civilizations, since telescopes on Earth can easily see that there is no air or water on the surface.

Mars is covered by a network of canals, but accounts of its inhabitants vary. According to the Virginian Captain John Carter, the Martians are a decadent civilization beset by tribes of four-armed nomads. But Mr. H.G. Wells has reported on an abortive "Martian" invasion of southern England by tentacled beings with highly advanced science. The two civilizations may share the Red Planet, or perhaps one "Mars" exists in another dimension beyond the Faerie Veil.

Venus is shrouded by clouds, and is widely believed to be a hot, swampy planet with dense jungles and constant rain. If theories of

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planetary evolution are correct, conditions on Venus may mirror those on Earth millions of years ago. There may be dinosaurs in those steaming jungles, or intelligent reptiles, or perhaps an ancient colony of humans.

### 5.2.9 Magickal Adventures

The existence of powerful sorcerous orders and the importance of magick means that a party of magicians will never lack for adventure. Characters in a magickal campaign must obviously include sorcerers (or possibly Faerie or Dragons). A couple of individuals more skilled with swords or pistols than sorcery can come in handy, given the time it takes to cast spells. Characters from different Orders will give the party a better balance of possible magickal effects, although rivalries may crop up between members of rival groups.

Magickal adventures have almost infinite possibilities. Characters can meet fallen gods, journey to other worlds beyond the Faerie Veil, or spend a week in animal form. A party of magic-users can go on quests for powerful magickal artifacts or books of forgotten lore. They can engage in political maneuvering and intrigue among the various Orders. They can try to cope with powerful magickal menaces which threaten the mundane world.

Blending sorcery with other campaign types opens up even more possibilities — magickal detection, magickal voyages to other planets, magickal espionage.

There are two main concerns for the Gamemaster in a sorcerous campaign. The first is that the characters are very powerful, and when acting as a group can be very powerful indeed. Players can be extremely creative when coming up with ways to use sorcery, so Gamemasters have to be sure the characters' foes are tough enough to pose a credible threat.

The second problem, ironically, is that a group of magicians are vulnerable. Since magick doesn't really allow any quick "zap" spells, a band of fairly ordinary thugs can overpower the most skilled magicians if they have the advantage of surprise. It's important to find a middle ground, so that the player characters can't just vaporize the opposition with a spell, but at the same time won't be pounded into steak Tartare by the villain's goons.

Fictional sources for magickal adventures include the books of John Bellairs (*The House With The Clock In Its Walls* and others), the short stories of Lord Dunsany, nearly everything by E. Nesbit, and the adventures of Dr. Strange from Marvel Comics.

### 5.2.10 Super-Science Adventures!

In a Super-Science campaign the adventurers are all inventors and scientists, with perhaps a few beautiful daughters, gruff Dwarf mechanics

and two-fisted assistants along. Comedy-relief servants and pompous aristocrats should be limited to only one per gaming group.

The focus of a Super-Science campaign is new discoveries and inventions — and various sinister forces trying to steal or misuse them. Great scientific minds can also be called in to deal with world-threatening menaces of a scientific nature.

In a typical Super-Science tale, someone invents a new device or discovers some new organism or phenomenon with amazing powers. If the scientist is mad or evil, he promptly uses his discovery for a fiendish plot which the adventurers must foil. If the scientist is good, then either villains attempt to steal the discovery and misuse it, or else it gets out of control on its own and becomes a world-threatening menace.

Stopping a Super-Scientific menace usually involves a mix of old-fashioned physical action and quick research and invention. While the beautiful daughters and two-fisted assistants battle the villains or flee from various catastrophes, the scientists and inventors must come up with a secret weapon to counter the menace.

Super-Science adventures can be combined with mystery stories (unraveling clues to determine the identity of the villain), tales of espionage (keeping a key invention out of the hands of the Prussians), sagas of exploration (menaces often appear first in exotic locales, or else the secret weapon requires something hard to come by in civilized lands), or horror stories (if the menace is gruesome enough). Other combinations are possible — *Wild, Wild West* got several seasons of episodes out of putting Super-Scientific menaces into the Old West.

### 5.2.11 How to Be an Arch-Villain

Players with a suitably sinister bent may wish to play villainous characters rather than heroic adventurers. There are certainly fictional precedents: the insidious Dr. Fu Manchu and the abominable Dr. Nikola both managed to come back for sequel after sequel despite having their plans thwarted.

In a villainous campaign the players must take the initiative, devising their own fiendish plots and schemes for world domination. Naturally they must also evade the efforts of police inspectors, consulting detectives and amateur busybodies trying to foil their plans. The gamemaster should make any would-be arch-villains work for their rewards — after all, their adversaries have the law, the army and the entire resources of right-thinking people everywhere.

If the villains are foiled, the players should take their failure in stride. Rome wasn't built in a day, so it may take several tries to destroy Paris. Aside from a few sneers and perhaps petulantly executing a henchman or two, a proper arch-villain's reaction to failure should be to

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begin planning his next world-shattering plot. To that end, gamemasters should be lenient about allowing Criminal Mastermind characters to escape the minions of justice.

Of course, the forces of evil may actually triumph. Successful villainous plots can change the campaign considerably — if a Master Villain manages to seize control of a major country, or wreck the global economy, or cause large-scale death and destruction, the cozy Victorian feel of *GURPS Castle Falkenstein* becomes grimmer and more hard-boiled. Gamemasters can consult the history of the Twentieth Century to see what kind of a world successful Arch-Villains can create.

### 5.2.12 Military Campaigns

Characters who are soldiers on active duty can make for a very action-filled campaign. If the players want some freedom of action, make the characters all officers, but any ranks are possible.

The best venues for military action are in the Balkans or Latin America, where there are usually a couple of wars going on, or else on the frontiers of the great colonial empires. Or the Gamemaster can end the tense standoff between Prussia and the Franco-Bavarian alliance and embroil Europe in an early Great War.

Military adventures don't have to be just a series of combats.

Soldiers can blunder into lost ruins that need exploring, get involved in espionage plots, or get sent on special secret missions. Military units may get called in to stop magickal or scientific menaces which have gotten out of hand (especially brave or suicidal soldier characters can go up against the dreaded Martian Tripods).

One specialty peculiar to the Castle Falkenstein universe is the military sorcerer. Without suitable magickal protection and information, armies of the Steam Age are tremendously vulnerable to enemy spells. While the officers and men of the line meet the enemy with gunfire and cold steel, the sorcerer officers counter the enchantments of their counterparts on the other side and try to magickally spy on and disrupt the enemy army. Fictional sources for military adventures in the period are many; Rudyard Kipling's are probably the best, although the Flashman books by George MacDonald Fraser give a very different view of things.

# 6 APPENDIX: CONVERTING CASTLE FALKENSTEIN TO GURPS

The original *Castle Falkenstein* game spawned half-a-dozen supplements and a number of magazine and on-line articles. This material can be adapted for use with the *GURPS* version quite easily, given a little common sense.

*Castle Falkenstein* used a relatively simple, free-form rules system which did not distinguish between attributes, skills, and advantages, but defined each character primarily by a varied set of Abilities, each rated from Poor to Extraordinary. Thus, converting to *GURPS* is mostly a matter of understanding what each Ability and rating means, and finding the equivalent *GURPS* character features.

## 6.0.1 Ratings and Corresponding Values

To begin with, *Castle Falkenstein* Abilities are always rated on the following scale:

*Poor (PR)*: Below the norm for this Ability. In *GURPS* terms, this may correspond to a small Disadvantage, Incompetence in one or a set of related Skills, an Attribute of less than 8, or simply leaving one or more commonly-known skills at the default level. Beings with a Poor rating in some supernatural power can be given a small Advantage with significant Limitations when converted to *GURPS*.

*Average (AV)*: The unremarkable human norm for the Ability (in New European society). This may imply a *GURPS* Attribute in the 9–11 range, commonly-known skills with a half-point or so spent on them, or other skills left at default levels. Supernatural powers rated Average are usually useful but limited.

*Good (GD)*: This rating implies some training, competence, or talent in an area, though nothing likely to leave anyone awestruck. It may correspond to a *GURPS* Attribute or one or a small set of related skills at around 12–13, or to a fairly minor Advantage.

*Great (GR)*: An impressive but by no means superhuman rating, this may correspond to a *GURPS* Attribute or one or a small set of related skills at around 14–15, to a large set of skills at lower levels, or to one or two substantial Advantages.

*Exceptional (EXC)*: Perhaps the highest rating in an Ability that most characters will encounter, this would correspond to a *GURPS* Attribute or one or a small set of related skills at around 15–17, to a large set of skills at lower levels, to one or more major Advantages, or to some combination of character features.

*Extraordinary (EXT)*: The highest possible rating in an Ability, and hence corresponding to a wide variety of possible *GURPS* character features. Humans may have an Attribute or a set of skills at 18–20, a whole catalogue of skills at lower (but still impressive) levels, or several Advantages; because this is the highest possible rating, with non-humans, it may correspond to almost any level of power.

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### 6.0.2 Standard Abilities

The following Abilities are the ones that will appear most often on *Castle Falkenstein* character descriptions. Note that if one of these is *not* listed for a particular character, it should be assumed to have a rating of Average.

#### 6.0.2.1 Athletics

This covers a range of physical activities, including team sports and horsemanship. It mostly corresponds to *GURPS DX*, though other Abilities are also relevant to that; in addition, characters with an above-Average Athletics rating should have a few points spent on *GURPS* Jumping, Riding (Horse), Running, a favorite Sport, Swimming, and Throwing (or at least some Weapon Throwing skills). Note especially that Riding is an important part of the Victorian-era world, especially for anyone who has been involved in travel, adventure, or upper-class life; any character with Athletics better than Poor should probably have at least a half-point in this Skill.

Characters with Great or better ratings might also have Acrobatics; those with Exceptional or Extraordinary Athletics might be given Enhanced Move or even Increased Speed.

#### 6.0.2.2 Charisma

This reflects general "likeability" and skill in dealing with others. A Poor rating may imply an Odious Personal Habit or Social Stigma; above-Average ratings generally translate to *GURPS* Charisma. The simplest approach is to give one level per step on the *Falkenstein* ratings chart (so Good would become Charisma +1, and Extraordinary would become Charisma +4). In addition, Good or better ratings and a military or adventuring background imply at least a point in Leadership skill.

However, characters who rate high on this should ideally also have some "interpersonal" Skills appropriate to their background (Carousing for bluff soldiers, Streetwise for ruffians, Merchant for bourgeois traders, and so on), and Exceptional or Extraordinary Charisma also implies a positive Reputation for wit and amiability; GMs may juggle the details.

#### 6.0.2.3 Comeliness

Poor Comeliness equates to Hideous or Ugly Appearance (or maybe Unattractive Appearance and an Odious Personal Habit); Good equates to Attractive Appearance, Great to Handsome or Beautiful, Exceptional to Very Handsome or Very Beautiful, and Extraordinary to Very Handsome/Beautiful, a point or so of Charisma, *and* probably a world-wide Reputation for sheer personal perfection.

#### 6.0.2.4 Connections

This reflects the level of society in which the character moves, and hence is reflected in several possible *GURPS* features. The most obvious is Status; Poor Connections implies negative Status, Average is usually Status 0–1, Good 1–2, Great 2–4, Exceptional 4–6, and Extraordinary 6–8. However, *GURPS* Advantages can modify this. If the character has Contacts, Allies, Ally Groups, or Patrons at a given level of society, he may get by with a lower nominal Status, and Wealth, or a Reputation that impresses the upper classes — say, as a fine high-society portrait painter — open many

doors that would otherwise be closed. Thus, GMs may have to apply some discretion when interpreting this Ability for conversion purposes.

### 6.0.2.5 Courage

This mostly converts to a *GURPS* Will; when the character's IQ has been determined (which may involve several *Falkenstein* Abilities), one can simply use Strong or Weak Will to set their Will Roll to a level corresponding to their Courage. However, Advantages such as Composed, Cool, or Imperturbable may be used to give a little more flavor to high-Courage characters, while those with Poor Courage may well have Combat Paralysis or a Phobia instead of simple Weak Will.

### 6.0.2.6 Education

This represents *general* education, which in Victorian society tends to be broad, if sometimes patchy, rather than specialized. (Remember that a scholarly upper-class Victorian youth might leave school with an excellent training in two dead languages, ancient history, and formal geometry, but only partial knowledge of the contemporary world, and no real understanding of technology.)

Poor Education implies a near-complete lack of formal education; in *GURPS* terms, the character has Illiteracy (or Semi-Literacy at best), may have the Innumerate or Uneducated Disadvantages, and cannot usually have spent points on foreign Languages or Science Skills. Average Education avoids any of those Disadvantages, and the character may spend up to maybe three or four points in Languages, Science Skills, and the like, reflecting basic schooling plus knowledge picked up in passing along the way

Higher ratings imply more points into such areas, perhaps with increasing specialization, according to the character concept; Great Education is equivalent to a university degree. However, characters will rarely have any one skill up to the normal equivalent *GURPS* level for their rating, at least until they reach Exceptional; to repeat, well-educated *Castle Falkenstein* characters tend to have breadth rather than depth.

Higher levels of Education may also imply above-average *GURPS* IQ, and even Eidetic Memory, ("the advantages of a trained mind"), again according to character concept.

### 6.0.2.7 Etherealness

See p. 00 for discussion of the range of effects this power grants faeries. In some older *Castle Falkenstein* books, it incorporates Shapeshifting; if a faerie character has no Shapeshifting rating listed, assume that it is equal to their Etherealness rating, or that it is Average.

### 6.0.2.8 Exchequer

A straightforward measure of personal wealth. Poor Exchequer corresponds to Poor Wealth, Average to Average, Good to Comfortable, Great to Wealthy, Exceptional to Very Wealthy, and Extraordinary to Filthy Rich (with some level of Multimillionaire in the case of kings, emperors, and some robber-baron industrialists).



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### 6.0.2.9 Fencing

This Ability can be converted directly to *GURPS* Fencing skill at the appropriate level. Almost all *Castle Falkenstein* characters are assumed to have handled a blade at some stage, so Average Fencing usually means a *GURPS* skill around 10. However, the Ability also covers other melee weapon use, so characters with high ratings especially should probably be given a few points in other sword skills, and possibly Axe/Mace and Spear. If the game is using the systems presented in *GURPS Martial Arts* or *Swashbucklers*, characters with Great or higher ratings might well be given an appropriate fencing style; Exceptional or Extraordinary ratings might well convert to a cinematic style package.

High ratings in this and other combat Abilities and Athletics might also suggest a good DX, giving the character good all-round *GURPS* combat ability.

### 6.0.2.10 Fisticuffs

This covers the whole range of *GURPS* close combat; the exact skills to take should be determined by character concept. Low-class bruisers should have Brawling, Blackjack and Knife, while gentlemen might have Boxing Sport at such good levels that it gives a useful default to practical Boxing combat. Wrestling is also possible — it is a recognized and respectable minority sport in this era — but probably only Mysterious Orientals would have Judo or Karate at high levels. Great or better ratings might correspond to a style package from *GURPS Martial Arts*.

### 6.0.2.11 Glamour

See p. 00 for discussion of the range of effects this power grants faeries.

### 6.0.2.12 Marksmanship

This Ability covers all manner of ranged weapons. For most characters, it will correspond to Guns (Pistol), Guns (Rifle), and Guns (Shotgun), with relative levels determined by character concept. However, it may also be used for bows (and remember that target archery is a respectable hobby for upper-class ladies) and crossbows (though thrown weapons use Athletics).

### 6.0.2.13 Perception

The reflects general responsiveness to one's environment. It may mostly be reflected in the character's sense rolls after conversion (bought up using Alertness as necessary), but high ratings often indicate a good IQ in *GURPS* terms, and also quick practical reactions, suggesting a raised DX and perhaps even Combat Reflexes.

Poor Perception may be reflected by a Disadvantage, usually Absent-Mindedness.

### 6.0.2.14 Performance

This defines the character's ability to amuse an audience, corresponding to a whole list of *GURPS* skills, depending on the character concept and social class. (High ratings may also suggest Advantages such as Musical Ability or Voice.) Dancing, Performance, and Singing are the first options to consider; high ratings will usually also suggest one or more

Musical Instrument skills, and perhaps Juggling or similar.

### 6.0.2.15 Physician

This is general medical knowledge. It mostly converts to First Aid Skill at lower levels; at higher, professional–grade levels, convert it Physician, and probably also Diagnosis and Surgery.

### 6.0.2.16 Physique

This is a measure of raw physical power, corresponding to ST, and also, to a lesser extent, HT, for *GURPS* characters. Note that *Castle Falkenstein* characters with low Physique but high Courage are assumed to have considerable will to live, and should be given low *GURPS* ST but decent HT.

### 6.0.2.17 Shapeshifting

See p. 00 for discussion of the range of effects this power grants faeries.

### 6.0.2.18 Social Graces

This Ability corresponds primarily to *GURPS* Savoir–Faire (a very important Skill in the setting); a Poor rating may indicate an Odious Personal Habit, Stuttering, Obnoxious Drunk, or just irretrievably low Status. At high levels, the character probably also rates useful skills in areas such as Dancing (for the sort of dances enjoyed in high society) and Appreciate Beauty; very high ratings probably imply a Reputation as a social lion.

### 6.0.2.19 Sorcery

A Poor rating in this Ability corresponds to Magickal Insensitivity (p. 00); a Good rating implies Magery–1, Great Magery–2, and so on. Note that faeries and dwarfs always have Poor ratings in this.

Any adventurous character with above–Average Sorcery will almost certainly have been recruited and trained by a Sorcerous Order, which will be noted on the character description. Hence, they will almost certainly have Ritual Magic skill at the highest level possible for them (10 + twice Magery), and all of their Order's Lorebook Skills at the same level. Dragons will have Dragon Magick (p. 00).

### 6.0.2.20 Stealth

This mostly corresponds to the *GURPS* skill of the same name. However, it also indicates general skill in concealment and the like; high ratings would suggest at least competence in Camouflage, Shadowing, Sleight of Hand, and possibly Pickpocket.

A Poor rating might suggest a low DX (if nothing else contradicts that), or an inconvenient Physical Disadvantage such as Fat or Klutz.

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### 6.0.2.21 Tinkering

This covers all manner of mechanical and electrical work, corresponding to a whole bundle of *GURPS* skills, Armoury and Lockpicking as well as Mechanic and Engineer, and Electronics for a few advanced scientists. At high levels, the character may well also have Gadgeteer. The character will probably also have at least basic Vehicle Skills for their preferred forms of mechanical transport.

### 6.0.3 Non-Standard Abilities

#### 6.0.3.1 Kindred Powers

Every type of faerie in the *Castle Falkenstein* world has its own Kindred Powers, which may be unique to that species. In general, these powers will have fairly self-explanatory names, or be described in adjacent notes; *GURPS* GMs will have to work through *Compendium I* to find the Advantages and Limitations that best reflect an individual being's abilities.

#### 6.0.3.2 Invented Abilities

*Castle Falkenstein* players and "Hosts" (GMs) are permitted to invent new Abilities at will, if a character needs them; this can be particularly relevant to characters from non-European cultures. In general, the names of such Abilities will be self-explanatory, and GMs should be able to find a corresponding *GURPS* Skill or whatever to set to the corresponding level.

### 6.0.4 Other Character Features

#### 6.0.4.1 Health

Health, or Health Points, are the *Castle Falkenstein* version of Hit Points. They reflect both physical robustness and will to live. As a working rule of thumb, one *Castle Falkenstein* Health Point equals two *GURPS* Hit Points. Usually, human characters can be left with their HT rating for hit points, but if this is very different to twice their *Castle Falkenstein* Health, use Extra Hit Points or Reduced Hit Points to reduce the discrepancy.

#### 6.0.4.2 Diary Entries

All *Castle Falkenstein* "Dramatic Characters" (PCs) are at least supposed to keep a diary (as discussed for *GURPS* characters on p. 00), the opening of which should mention their personal principles, friends, enemies, and the like. If this is available for a character being converted, it will probably suggest several *GURPS* character features: Allies, Enemies, Obsessions, Codes of Honor, Quirks, and so on.

### 6.0.5 Example: Anthony Brock

Anthony Brock was created as a starting *Castle Falkenstein* character; a would-be benevolent mastermind on the rise. His character notes mention his cool, detached focus on his goals, his disdain for mediocrity, his hand-built reciprocator, the flash bomb concealed in his cane, his restrained fondness for the Sidhe Lady Ellethienne (a Second Compact agent

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who once aided him), and his enmity for Professor Rozenvolte of Berlin. They also give his Abilities; Good Athletics, Good Comeliness, Great Education, Poor Fisticuffs, Good Marksmanship, Poor Performance, Good Stealth, and Great Tinkering. How does he convert to **GURPS**?

To begin with his Attributes; his Physique and Courage are both Average, and his Athletics and Fisticuffs balance out, suggesting someone in unremarkable physical condition, so we will give him ST and HT 10. However, his athleticism, Marksmanship, and Stealth suggest a degree of speed and deftness, so a DX of 13 seems appropriate. IQ is harder; Perception is usually the first place we look for a hint, but this is only Average, whereas everything else marks Brock down as a clever fellow. We give him IQ 14, and make a note to reflect his restricted awareness of his immediate surroundings elsewhere.

Now for the Ability list. We convert Athletics to Jumping–12, Riding (Horse)–13, Running–11, Swimming–12, and Throwing–13 (remember that flash bomb). Brock does not sound the sort for team sports, so we ignore that option. His Comeliness converts to Attractive Appearance. Great Education suggests a university background, and we know that he spent time in Germany, so we work through the **GURPS** skills list, mostly picking up half–point or one–point values except where his interests suggest he would focus more, but raising one or two quite high to assist his technological creativity; Language (French)–12, Language (German)–14, Language (Greek)–12, Language (Latin)–12, Naturalist–11, Chemistry/TL5–15, History–13, Literature–12, Mathematics–14, Philosophy (Classical)–11, Physics–15, Research–14, and Theology–11. Good Marksmanship is going to be applied mostly to his reciprocator, but he should be able to handle pistols and rifles; actually, the lowest Skill levels his attributes permit is 14, so we will give him three different skills at that; Guns/TL5 (Machine Pistol)–14, Guns/TL5 (Pistol)–14, Guns/TL5 (Rifle)–14.

Good Stealth converts primarily to Stealth–13, with Camouflage–13, Shadowing–12, and Sleight of Hand–10 also plausible. And last among his above–Average ratings, Great Tinkering suggests quite a few options; Armoury/TL5–12, Mechanic/TL5 (Clockwork and Small Gadgets)–13, Mechanic/TL5 (Steam Engine)–13, Mechanic/TL5 (Small Electric Motors)–13, Electronics/TL5–11 (we suspect he will have studied the new field, but not become an expert), Engineer/TL5 (Vehicles)–13, Engineer/TL5 (Bombs and traps)–12, Engineer/TL5 (Clockwork)–13, Engineer/TL5 (Guns)–13, Lockpicking/TL5–12, Traps/TL5–12, and Driving (Steam Vehicle)–11. We pass on Gadgeteer, although it is a strong possibility; Brock is *primarily* a mastermind, not an inventor.

Although his Fencing and Physician are Average by default, this setting and his adventurous career make a half–point each in the related basic **GURPS** Skills reasonable; Fencing–11, First Aid/TL5–13. Likewise, Average Connections allow Status 0 or 1; with his university education, Brock rates a 1, giving him Savoir–Faire–16 by default.

His Poor ratings are slightly problematic. For Fisticuffs, this mostly means a lack of training, but it should also amount to a little more of a problem; the best option seems to be a Quirk, "Dislikes close combat." For Performance, it suggests a couple of Incompetence Disadvantages, in Singing and Performance (a genuine minor problem for anyone trying to get on in Victorian high society), and given the general picture we have of a rather driven man, another Quirk, "Slightly uncomfortable with social frivolity" seems in order. (The Oblivious Disadvantage was tempting, but Brock does not seem to be a complete social incompetent.)

Finally, we add a little more color. The Single–Minded Advantage seems highly appropriate, and along with an Obsession with gaining power and technological advantages (worth –10 points) and Proud (–1 point), helps explain his that Perception rating. That fondness for Lady Elletienne is just another Quirk (a Seelie agent hardly needs protecting as

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a Dependent), and of course, Professor Rozenvolte is an Enemy — say, very formidable, on 6 or less. Adding up the values, we find that Anthony Brock comes to 128 1/2 points.

# 7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

## 7.1 Books

Note that the following are sources favored by the authors of this adaptation. The original *Castle Falkenstein* game and its supplements have further bibliographies covering the sources used by its original authors. For other useful material, see the unofficial but excellent *Castle Falkenstein Reading List* on the Web, at <http://www.io.com/~bowman/Falkenstein/bib.html>.

### 7.1.1 Non-Fiction

Barber, Noel: *The Lords of the Golden Horn*.

Bidwell, Robin: *Travellers in Arabia*.

*Encyclopedia Britannica*

Freeth, Zahra, and Winstone, H.V.F.: *Travellers in Arabia*.

Girouard, Mark: *The English Town; The Victorian Country House*.

Israel, Fred, ed.: *1897 Sears Roebuck Catalogue*.

Manchester, William: *The Last Lion* (Volume I has a very good portrait of the British Empire at its peak).

Osprey Books' *Men-At-Arms* series has several volumes depicting military uniforms of the period.

Pool, Daniel: *What Jane Austen Ate and Charles Dickens Knew*.

Tuchman, Barbara: *The Proud Tower*.

Wheatcroft, Andrew: *The Ottomans*.

### 7.1.2 Fiction

*Castle Falkenstein* draws on the vast body of Victorian literature, along with traditional myths and fairy-tales and modern "steampunk" SF. Virtually anything from the period can be used for an idea of atmosphere and style, but the following are especially relevant:

Baxter, Stephen: *Anti-Ice*.

Blaylock, James: *Homonculus* and *Lord Kelvin's Machine*.

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Chesterton, G.K.: *The Man Who Was Thursday*.

Davidson, Avram: *The Adventures of Doctor Eszterhazy*.

Dickens, Charles: anything and everything. (Dickens is the definitive portraitist of mid-Victorian society.)

Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan: the "Sherlock Holmes" stories (available in various collections and editions); the "Professor Challenger" series and various independent short stories are also well worth a look. (One version of the *Forgotten Futures* RPG, as described below, makes the Challenger stories available in computer form.)

Fraser, George MacDonald: the "Flashman" series.

Frost, Mark: *The List of Seven*.

Garrett, Randall: The "Lord Darcy" series.

Gibson, William, and Sterling, Bruce: *The Difference Engine*.

Hope, Anthony: *The Prisoner of Zenda*; *Rupert of Hentzau*.

Jeter, K.W.: *Infernal Devices*.

Kipling, Rudyard: virtually anything, especially earlier works (his main themes being colonial adventure, the supernatural, and science fiction).

Moore, Alan, and O'Neill, Kevin: *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* (comics series).

Newman, Kim: *Anno Dracula*.

Powers, Tim: *The Anubis Gates*.

Priest, Christopher: *The Space Machine*.

Verne, Jules: numerous novels; *Around the World in Eighty Days*, *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, *The Mysterious Island*, *From Earth to the Moon*, *Around the Moon*, *Master of the World* and *Robur the Conqueror* are of particular interest. (Look for complete editions and better-quality translations where possible.)

Wells, H.G.: Wells started writing at the end of the century, but *The Time Machine* and *The War of the Worlds* are important.

### 7.2 Other Roleplaying Games

### 7.2.0.1 Castle Falkenstein

The original *Castle Falkenstein* RPG line, published by R.Talsorian Games Inc., took the form of a core rulebook and half-a-dozen supplements (and also two novels), all of which may be available from games shops and booksellers, though they may technically be out of print. The extended background can of course be used in *GURPS Castle Falkenstein* games, and the game-mechanical information can be adapted (see the Appendix, p. 00).

The core rulebook details much of the background, with a focus on New Europa, and includes much of Tom Olam's account of his arrival on the world, the restoration of King Ludwig to the throne, and the subsequent war with Prussia.

*Comme Il Faut* is described as "A Castle Falkenstein Companion," and includes extensive information on New European culture (especially high society) and campaign ideas, along with not only variant rules for the original game, but also suggestions for live-action play.

*Steam Age* provides fully-illustrated coverage of numerous vehicles and devices (some of them definitely Infernal).

*Six-Guns and Sorcery* is a very detailed treatment of North America in the Falkenstein world, in the form of an account of Tom Olam's first trip there, with additional notes.

*The Book of Sigils* considerably extends the available information on Sorcerous Orders and their Lorebooks, including accounts of several non-European groups. (The new spell effects it details can be adapted directly to the *GURPS Castle Falkenstein* magick system.)

*The Memoirs of Auberon of Faerie* is a major treatment of New European faeries, including the history of their activities in other universes; *GURPS* GMs will have to add game mechanics, but this should not be unduly difficult.

*The Lost Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci* deals with Engine Magick in detail, with descriptions of all the sorcerous engines currently thought to be possible.

The two novels, *From Prussia With Love* and *Masterminds of Falkenstein*, were both written by John DeChancie and published by Proteus/Prima Publishing. They describe the further adventures of Tom Olam, including numerous encounters with other major figures of New Europa.

### 7.2.0.2 Others

Several other RPGs have dealt with 19th Century, fairy-tale, or steampunk themes; the following may be currently available and of particular interest

*Call of Cthulhu*, from Chaosium, is a classic horror game; although the original version is set in the 1920s, one major supplement, *Cthulhu by Gaslight*, and several follow-up works, focus on the later Victorian era.

*Forgotten Futures*, a game of Victorian scientific romances, is currently published in the form of computer files; see <http://www.ffutures.demon.co.uk> for information. Each version of that game comes with a collection of classic out-of-copyright stories.



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*Mage: the Ascension*, from White Wolf, (adapted as ***GURPS Mage: the Ascension***, of course); see especially the supplements *Sons of Ether* (for mad science), *Order of Hermes* (the ultimate western sorcerous society), and *The Book of Worlds* (science and magick fighting multi-sided battles across the dimensions and the solar system).

*Space 1889*, from GDW, is long out of print, but was the original steampunk colonial RPG.

### 7.3 Moving Pictures

The cinema often does swashbuckling fairly well, if not generally with a Victorian setting; steampunk technology, colonial adventure, and fairy-tale magic are rarer, but not unknown. The following films and TV series may repay attention:

*The Adventures of Brisco County Jr.*

The *Dr Who?* stories *Pyramids of Mars* and the near-perfect *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*.

*The Great Train Robbery*

*Lawrence of Arabia*

*Mad Love*

*The Man Who Would Be King*

*Master of the World*

*The Mummy* (the various versions are quite different, but most are appealing)

*Pascali's Island*

*The Prisoner of Zenda* (any version, though the black-and-white Ronald Coleman version is often rated highest).

*Royal Flash*

Most Sherlock Holmes adaptations have some interest, though some are better than others; the most recent British TV versions were very impressive.

*20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*

*Wild Wild West* (the TV series was obviously a major inspiration for ***Falkenstein***; the recent movie may be underrated).

## 7.4 Web Sites

The original *Castle Falkenstein* game has inspired plenty of unofficial fan sites on the Web; furthermore, there are countless sites dedicated to Victorian history and culture, steampunk fiction, and old technology. The following may be of particular use; obviously, given the ephemeral nature of the Web, not all are guaranteed to survive indefinitely.

*The Falkenstein Babbage Authors League* (a Web ring devoted to the game):

**<http://www.towersoft.com.au/staff/geoff/cf/cfwrhome.htm>**

*Victoriana, Resources for Victorian Living*: **<http://www.victoriana.com/>**

*Phil Masters's Steampunk Resource Links*: **<http://www.philm.demon.co.uk/Steampunk/>**

*Mark Baker's Castle Falkenstein page*: **[http://www.lange.demon.co.uk/Castle\\_Falkenstein/CF\\_Index.html](http://www.lange.demon.co.uk/Castle_Falkenstein/CF_Index.html)**

*Neuschwanstein Castle*: **<http://www.mediaspec.com/castles/schwan/index.html>**

*Scientific American in the 19th Century*: **[http://www.history.rochester.edu/Scientific\\_American/](http://www.history.rochester.edu/Scientific_American/)**

*The Zeppelin Library*: **<http://www.ciderpresspottery.com/ZLA.html>**

*The History of Costume*: **<http://www.siue.edu/COSTUMES/history.html>**

*Pages devoted to Emperor Norton*: **<http://www.zpub.com/sf/history/nort.html>**,  
**<http://www.discovery.com/DCO/doc/1012/world/wayback/wayback061796/wayback.html>**

*The Royal Flashman Society of Upper Canada*: **<http://www.pangloss.ca/flashman/>**

