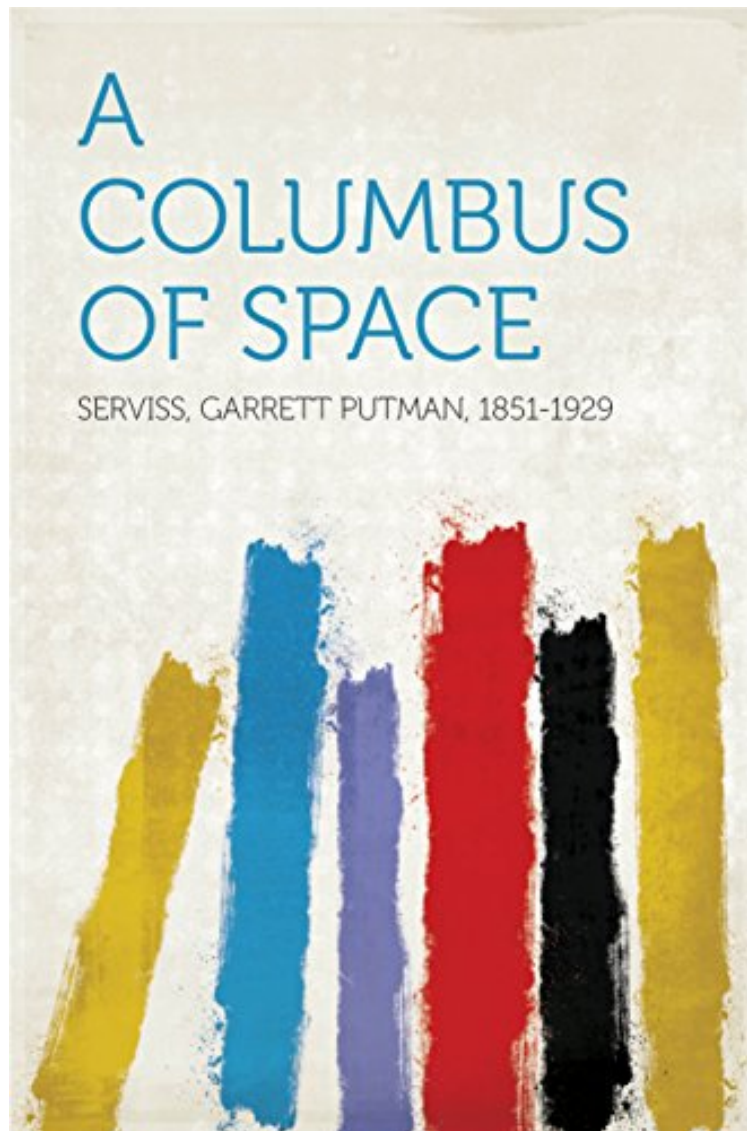


[Ebook pdf] A Columbus of Space

A Columbus of Space

Von Garrett Putman, 1851-1929 Serviss

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Von Garrett Putman, 1851-1929 Serviss : A Columbus of Space before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Columbus of Space:

Kundenrezensionen Hilfreichste Kundenrezensionen 1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich.
Fascinating Science Fiction Story Von Meks Librarian A science fiction novel from 1909, this was an action-packed companion on my daily train rides to and from work, a good example of the way imagination and scientific facts (as they were known then) were combined to produce a thrilling story. The author, Garrett Putnam Serviss (1851-1929),

was an American astronomer who produced more scientific publications than works of fiction. He promoted astronomy wherever and whenever he could, and so it is little wonder that he used his talent for explaining scientific facts to ordinary readers for this purpose. A group of friends travel to Venus in a "car" (the author deliberately avoids calling it a ship) constructed by one of their number, a scientist with a brilliant mind, who - like the author himself - has always been explaining scientific and other complicated facts to his lesser gifted friends. The car runs on nuclear power, and their aim is Venus, because their guide is certain of the planet's habitability. The description of the inside of the car must be a delight to any Steampunk aficionado out there: comfortable benches upholstered in leather, brass knobs and handles, metal buttons and grills in front of small mouth-shaped openings for the air conditioning, a store of food, tobacco and wine to keep the friends sustained during their voyage, and so on. At that time, Venus was still thought to rotate in a way that it would always show the same hemisphere to the sun, making it a planet divided into one half of eternal darkness and one of eternal sunshine. That is what the friends find, and of course the inhabitants of the two sides differ accordingly. They arrive on the dark side, and have some adventures there; but the larger and more adventurous part of the story takes place on the sun side, where they venture later. After having crossed crystal mountains and vast stormy oceans, they reach the land of a people of such a high degree of civilization that spoken language has almost completely been replaced by telepathy. Of course, the scientific leader of the group does not take long to learn that language, and makes many astonishing discoveries. The adventure wouldn't be an adventure if there wasn't some element of danger, and so the friends soon find they have unwittingly made an enemy who does not rest until he has them nearly destroyed. During their flight, more creatures of the planet are encountered, some of them very terrible and dangerous. Several times, without wanting it, the friends become responsible for the loss of life on both sides of the planet - a fact they deeply regret. They have not set out to conquer, but to investigate and to satisfy their scientific curiosity, but they bring death and bloodshed, even making their leader exclaim he wished he had never brought them on this voyage. Eventually, though, the group manages to make their way back to Earth. The story ends on a "mysterious" note: while the others all more or less resume their former lives after about two years of absence, the leader and his car disappear after a little while, and are never heard of again. I like the way the author describes the landscapes, buildings and inhabitants of Venus, and how he never makes out that humans are superior to anything and anyone, but can learn from others, if they are open-minded.

KurzbeschreibungHardPress Classic Books SeriesKurzbeschreibungHardPress Classic Books SeriesSynopsis Garrett Putnam Serviss (1851-1929) was an astronomer, popularizer of astronomy, and early science fiction writer. He took a law degree at Columbia. In 1876 he joined the staff of the New York Sun newspaper. Serviss showed a talent for explaining scientific details, leading Andrew Carnegie to invite him to deliver The Urania Lectures on cosmology, astronomy, and geology. Serviss toured the United States for over two years delivering these lectures, then settling down to become a popular speaker in the New York area. He gained a syndicated newspaper column devoted to astronomy and other sciences and wrote frequently for the leading magazines of the day. Serviss's favourite topic was astronomy, as shown by the fact that of the fifteen books he wrote, eight are devoted to that science. His works includes: Astronomy Through an Opera Glass (1888), A Columbus of Space (1894), Edison's Conquest of Mars (1898), The Moon Metal (1900), Pleasures of the Telescope (1901), The Moon (1907), Astronomy With the Naked Eye (1908), Curiosities of the Sky (1909), Round the Year With the Stars (1910), and Astronomy in a Nutshell (1912).