John and myself rushed from his cabin, intending to
go on deck. We had hardly reached the stairway when
we seemed in the midst of a rush and roar of waters,
so terrible that I fell senseless to the floor.

CHAPTER VIII.

How long I remained in that condition I have no
means of knowing. When I came to myself I found
Sir John still unconscious by my side. I carried him
to the saloon, where I revived him, with considerable
difficulty. The stillness on board was frightful, and
everything seemed most curiously out of its normal
position. We were utterly at a loss to account for
what had happened, and after much hesitation con-
cluded to go on deck. What was our surprise on find-
ing ourselves in the middle of a vast tunnel, black as
night, save for the rays of our electric lamps, which
only made the gloom more visible. A few leaves torn
from Sir John's note-book and thrown into the air
quickly disappeared above our heads, showing that we
ourselves were falling with an enormous velocity—
none other than that obtained by the formula:—

\[ P. D. Q. \times g. \]

(\( g = \) acceleration produced by gravity).

Then the truth flashed upon me; Siemms's theory was
correct. The mountain we had seen had been merely
a sort of bulwark around the opening of that vast
tunnel, which he claimed must pass through the centre
of the earth from pole to pole.

The sailor sent to right the mirror upon the head of
the plesiosaurus had in some way injured the cerebel-
um of the animal, and so caused the rotary movement
it exhibited. While in this condition our disabled
craft had been drawn along by the water rushing
through the pass, and had been precipitated into the
tunnel, from which we now saw no escape. All
the time it was evident that the rapidity of our descent
was increasing, although, as we all fell together, our
relative positions remained about the same. The tem-
perature, which had been rising, remained stationary,
for some unexplained reason, after reaching about
98° F.

How long we remained on deck I do not know. All
the clocks on board had stopped, and each minute
seemed an age. At last a faint point of light because
visible far above our heads. Our speed gradually
slackened. We had evidently passed the centre of the
earth, and we were nearing the end of our first vibration.
The point of light broadened to a wide opening, — the
southern end of the great well, — and we saw the blue
sky far above our heads with a despair deeper than
any I had ever dreamed before.

Soon all motion of the plesiosaurus ceased, but only
for a moment before the horrible downward movement
toward the other pole began. Once more we left the
light of day, and then in despair sought our cabins for
the rest we so much needed. I must have slept many
hours before I was awakened by Sam, who with a hor-
rified expression, begged me to come on deck. I did
so, and found all on board assembled there. Imagine
my amazement on following their eyes to see Sir John
some thirty feet above our heads falling through the
air after us with hair and coat-tails streaming to the
wind. A spring-board rigged up on the deck gave me
a clew to his strange position, and I correctly surmised
that when the plesiosaurus had last reached the high-
est point of its ascending movement, it had approached
quite near to the walls of the tunnel, and that Sir John,
encouraged by the fact, had in vain endeavored to make
his escape by jumping to the sides.

His position was one of no immediate danger, as the
fall would not injure him, provided he did not jar him-
self by stopping suddenly. His voice was lost to us in
the rapid motion, but from his gestures I surmised that
he wished for something to eat, and sent the cook be-
low, who returned with a large bun. I took the best
aim I could and threw the bun at Sir John, quite for-
getting that, by the distribution of matter on all sides
of us, the force of gravity upon it was balanced on
every side except toward the earth's centre. As a re-
result of my oversight the bun, instead of reaching Sir
John, passed into an elliptical orbit, having Sir John
some thirty feet above our heads falling through the
air after us with hair and coat-tails streaming to the
wind. A spring-board rigged up on the deck gave me
a clew to his strange position, and I correctly surmised
that when the plesiosaurus had last reached the high-
est point of its ascending movement, it had approached
quite near to the walls of the tunnel, and that Sir John,
encouraged by the fact, had in vain endeavored to make
his escape by jumping to the sides.

His position was one of no immediate danger, as the
fall would not injure him, provided he did not jar him-
self by stopping suddenly. His voice was lost to us in
the rapid motion, but from his gestures I surmised that
he wished for something to eat, and sent the cook be-
low, who returned with a large bun. I took the best
aim I could and threw the bun at Sir John, quite for-
getting that, by the distribution of matter on all sides
of us, the force of gravity upon it was balanced on
every side except toward the earth's centre. As a re-
result of my oversight the bun, instead of reaching Sir
John, passed into an elliptical orbit, having Sir John
for a focus, and with an eccentricity of about .789.
The bun of course had the common tendency of us all
to fall toward the centre of the earth, but, all sidewise
pulls being balanced, it was as I should have remem-
bered, free to move under the influence of the impulse
I had given it, and Sir John's own attractive force.

Sir John's anxiety regarding the bun was apparent,
even from our point of view, and he soon took out his
note-book to calculate its period and perihelion dis-
tance. My own calculations gave period, = 127.9 min.,
perihelion distance, = 3.981 feet, which, taking account
of the atmosphere as a resisting medium, would be
shortened to 26.7 inches, the length of Sir John's arm
in ninety-four revolutions.