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The atmosphere may shoot itself away! It is known exactly how high the lower half of the atmosphere extends, but not how high the upper half. The lower half extends to 3.6 miles, or 19,000 feet. This height may be easily visited. In fact, it has been visited many times; the height record for airplanes is 53,936 feet. The top of the atmosphere may be calculated and that is about all, because we can never visit it unless we do so in a rocket. At 50 miles high there is no appreciable pressure; and at 20,000 miles the earth has difficulty to hold its atmosphere, due to centrifugal force, and the lighter gases may be shooting themselves away by their molecular energy.

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