

Published every month by The Scienceers.

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IN THE PATH OF THE PIONEER

At present there are three monthly magazines and two quarterlies that print scientific fiction exclusively. It is reliably reported that another monthly periodical specializing in this type of literature will shortly make its appearance. In addition to these all-science fiction magazines, there are several general fiction periodicals which frequently print stories of a scientific nature.

Since this trend toward scientific fiction was scarcely noticeable a few years ago, one naturally seeks its source or inspiration. It is at once notable that until the appearance of *Amazing Stories* in 1926 there was not a single all-scientifiction magazine on the market. Since then, however, the number of such magazines has been steadily increasing. Full credit, therefore, should be accorded the pioneer in its field--*Amazing Stories*.

SPACE-FLYING AS NEWS

Every now and then one reads in the papers of proposed rocket flights to the moon, Mars, or Venus. The attitude of the press toward such projects is invariably flippant. Whenever the subject of interplanetary communication appears in the news, it is treated with unconcealed levity and ridicule. It seems to us that this attitude is wholly unwarranted.

In this age of scientific achievement, when the wonders of yesterday become the commonplaces of today, the idea of interplanetary travel should be accepted as a definite possibility that is certain to be realized in the not distant future.

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If this belief seems unduly optimistic, one need but recall the scepticism and derision which greeted the first attempts at flight in a heavier-than-air machine. Today transoceanic flights are almost everyday affairs. So why scoff at pioneer attempts to conquer interplanetary space?

- A. G.

THE INTERNAL HEAT OF THE EARTH

Some time in the future, engineers drilling down deep into the earth will come to heat so intense that it will be used as fuel. This statement is not just a fantastic dream; it is a pure scientific fact. There is a mine in Johannesburg, South Africa, where the circulating air is so hot at 7,000 feet and below that it could generate 3,000 horsepower if it were suitably applied.

Sir Charles Parsons, the inventor of the steam turbine, John Hodgson, his colleague, and Prof. Harlow Shapley believe that the project of tapping the earth's internal heat is scientifically sound. They have stated that the cost of the project would be insignificant compared to the return it would bring. England, where coal is rapidly becoming exhausted, has taken this idea up. When man makes his last stand against the forces that threaten to overwhelm him, he will return to the earth from where he sprung; and the race of mankind will perhaps endure for eons more.

- HERBERT SMITH.

THOUGHT MACHINE

A machine which registers thought by curves has been invented by Prof. Hans Berger of the University of Jena. The device converts thought into electric energy, which is registered on a chart. The latter is somewhat like a seismographic recorder. Deep thinking shows violent ups and downs; shallow thinking, merely a zigzag line. So far, however, nobody has been able to read the thoughts themselves; but further research along that line will be made.

- NATHAN GREENFELD.

EROS

The little planet Eros is on its way to visit the earth, traveling at an average speed of fifteen miles per second. Awaited by astronomers all over the world, this fascinating member of the solar system will remain in the neighborhood of the earth from October, 1930, to May, 1931. Though invisible to the naked eye, it can readily be discerned with field glasses or telescope during its stay in our midst.

Eros is believed to be about fifteen miles in diameter, and is the most useful member of a family of 1,200 asteroids. Coming within 16,700,000 miles of the earth, it will be pulled out of its elliptic path by the attraction of this globe. Astronomers, by measuring the amount of this deviation, can compute the mass or weight of the earth more accurately than ever before. In saying farewell to the earth in May, it will not vanish into outer darkness but into the brightness of the sun's radiation.

- PHILIP ROSENBLATT.

"QUALITY, NOT QUANTITY"

Great intellect and large brains do not always go together. When Anatole France, a most brilliant author, died in 1924 he directed that his brain be weighed. The result showed a weight of 1,190 grams -- decidedly less than the average. A typical brain of a man weighs about 1,300 grams. The brain of France was exceedingly wrinkled, however. Anatomists believe that there are more and deeper convolutions in the brains of intelligent persons.

- MORTIMER WEISINGER.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Through the courtesy of our President, Nathan Greenfeld, the following books will be available to members: "The World Below," by S. Fowler Wright; "The Monster Men," by Edgar Rice Burroughs; "The Day the World Ended," by Sax Rohmer; "Red Snow," by F.W. Moxley. All of these stories are of the science-fiction type, and have been published quite recently.

SIR EDGAR VISITS THE SCIENCEERS

By Allen Glasser

The regular Saturday night meeting of The Scienceers, world-famous organization of super-scientists, was in session in the elaborate quarters provided for its use by Col. Mortimer Weisinger, wealthy treasurer of the society. In the luxurious clubroom, its walls adorned with priceless paintings and tapestries, a half dozen distinguished members sat in richly-upholstered leather armchairs, discussing in cultured tones the latest achievements in the realm of science.

Prof. Herbert Smith, noted astronomer, was discoursing on the nature of the newly-discovered planet Pluto, when an insistent ringing of the doorbell interrupted his lecture and woke the other members.

They heard the door being opened by the footman, a loud voice demanding admittance, and the sound of a scuffle. Then a hatless, disheveled man burst into the clubroom.

"It works!" he shouted wildly. "It works! The first successful space-machine ever built! I've just tested it; and now I want you, the world's greatest scientists, to accompany me on my initial trip into interplanetary space -- a voyage to Mars! Will you go?" He paused and stared expectantly at the astonished members.

"The man's mad!" cried Dr. Charles Weiner, the famous nerve specialist. "Throw him out!"

"Wait!" It was Philip Rosenblatt, the electrical wizard, who spoke. "Give him a chance. He may have something worth while."

"Quite so," agreed Capt. Allen Glasser, noted author and explorer; and turning to the intruder, he asked, "Can you prove your claims?"

"Of course!" the stranger replied. "The machine is in my laboratory not far from here. Come with me, and I'll show it to you."

"One moment," spoke up the Hon. Nathan Greenfeld, President of the association; "Who are you, may I ask?"

The stranger drew himself up proudly. "I am Sir Edgar Ray Merritt, of London," he declared. "I came to New York recently to perfect my space-flier. But come; there is no time to waste."

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PLANETS DISCOVERED IN MODERN TIMES

That greatest of astronomical events, the discovery of a new planet, has occurred three times since 1781. These planets are Uranus, discovered by Sir William Herschel; Neptune, discovered by the combined efforts of Leverrier of France and Adams of England; and Pluto, discovered by a search based on the mathematical calculations of Prof. Percival Lowell.

Uranus was discovered by accident. While trying out a new telescope Herschel was surprised to find a strange new planet appear in his range of vision. It was far out beyond Saturn, which from time immemorial had been assumed to be the outermost planet of all. That was the first real discovery of a planet.

Noting peculiarities in the orbit of Uranus, two young astronomers, Leverrier and Adams, came to the conclusion that the disturbance was caused by a new planet situated at a further distance from the sun. Working independently of each other, both were able to discover the new planet, later named Neptune, in 1846.

But the disturbances in the orbit of Uranus were not fully explained by the discovery of Neptune, and astronomers began searching for a new planet even further from the sun. Prominent among them were Percival Lowell and W. H. Pickering, two of America's greatest astronomers. When Lowell died, the Lowell observatory, using the figures of Prof. Lowell, took up the search where he left off. Their quest was crowned with success, and a new planet, now known as Pluto, was discovered in January, 1930.

- HERBERT SMITH.

SIR EDGAR VISITS THE SCIENCEERS
(continued)

He strode to the door, and, convinced by his evident sincerity, the eminent clubmen followed him to the street.

"Sorry I didn't bring my car," apologized Sir Edgar; "but I was too excited to think of it. I came by taxi."

"That's quite all right," said Col. Weisinger. "We'll use mine." He waved his hand, and a shiny Rolls Royce that had been parked at the corner drew up before the waiting group.

"Where to, sir?" the chauffeur asked respectfully, as the men entered the spacious, richly-fitted vehicle.

Sir Edgar answered, giving an address on Kingsbridge Road.

In less than ten minutes the car came to a stop before a one-story brick building, unlighted and seemingly deserted.

"Here we are!" exclaimed Sir Edgar, as the men alighted from the car. "Now to see the greatest invention of the age."

They were about to enter the building when the sound of running footsteps behind them was heard. As they turned, two men in gray uniforms dashed up to the surprised group. Singling out Sir Edgar from the rest, they grasped him firmly by the arms and started to lead him away.

"Say! What's the idea?" someone called after them.

"Nothing much," answered one of the uniformed men over his shoulder. "We're just taking Goofy Gus back to the bug-house. He went nuts reading science-fiction and he's hopped on going to Mars. He pulls the same stuff every time he gets loose. You guys fell for it hard. Ha! ha! ha!"

NOTICE: The Scienceers meets every Saturday night at 266 Van Cortlandt Avenue, near Mosholu Parkway, Bronx, New York. Discussions and debates on scientific subjects are held every week. Information about the club and its program appears every Friday in the New York "Evening World" among news of the Yosian Brotherhood, with which it is affiliated.

PROF. ALBERT EINSTEIN, in a recent radio speech in Berlin, declared that "millions of persons thoughtlessly use the wonders of science without having grasped them intellectually any more than a cow understands the botany of the plants it chews." The truth of this statement is too obvious to require further comment. Just think it over.

"MY FAVORITE SCIENTIFCTION STORY"

The best work of scientific fiction written within recent years, in my opinion, is "The Skylark of Space," by Edward Elmer Smith. My reasons for choosing this story are as follows:

(1) The story was highly original, and was written in a convincing and interesting manner.

(2) It was thrilling, adventurous, and full of human interest, wonderfully handled.

(3) The science in the story is above serious criticism; being written by a scientist who knew when to regard facts, and disregard unproved theories.

(4) The letters of the readers commenting on the story testified that it was liked by all. There was not one derogatory letter in the lot.

- NATHAN GREENFELD.

"The Second Deluge," by Garrett P. Serviss has had a hold on me ever since I first read it. I have re-read it so often that the characters seem to be living people. When a famous scientist like Garrett P. Serviss couples his knowledge with his imagination, the result is bound to be something decidedly unusual, and "The Second Deluge" was a truly amazing story. The vivid description and gripping action of this thrilling narrative make it one that will not soon be forgotten. - MORTIMER WEISINGER.

"The Ark of the Covenant," by Victor MacClure, will be remembered by me forever as the scientifiction story. The plot of the story is up-to-date. It shows the supremacy of aircraft over all other existing means of travel. The science used in the story can be understood by laymen, and explanatory footnotes are not needed. From the moment I started "The Ark of the Covenant," I was thoroughly absorbed in it. The plot is quick-moving and the action never lags. Moreover, the story points out the uselessness of war, and shows the great power science has for good when properly used.

- HERBERT SMITH.

ISOLATION OF CRIMINALS

In the informal discussion on methods of dealing with the criminal and abolishing crime, which was held at our clubrooms recently, I advocated the isolation of confirmed criminals (i. e., imbeciles and morons) in order that they may not be allowed to propagate. In Wisconsin and several other states, this idea is partly carried out with some success. In these states such criminals are sterilized.

If all civilized nations would adopt this method of dealing with mental defectives, from which class most criminals come, I believe that crime would gradually diminish until it is entirely wiped out, and the world will become a much better place in which to live.

- HERMAN D. KAIDOR.

CURRENT SCIENCE FICTION

Stories by two topnotch writers of scientifiction appear in the October issue of AMAZING STORIES. One is "The Man from the Moon," by Otis Adelbert Kline; the other, "The Man Who Saw the Future," by Edmond Hamilton. Both these writers are noted for the gripping action and absorbing interest that characterize their stories. We recommend this issue.

In the October number of ASTOUNDING STORIES we have "The Invisible Death," by Victor Rousseau; "Stolen Brains," by Capt. S. P. Meek; and Part Two of Ray Cummings' serial, "Jetta of the Lowlands." Need more be said?

"The Lizard-Men of Buh-Lo," by Francis Flagg is the high-spot of WONDER STORIES for October; though the issue contains several other good tales.

Although A. Merritt's latest novel, "The Snake Mother," will not start in ARGOSY until October 25th, the magazine is already heralding its advent. And they are quite justified in doing so, as all Merritt fans will agree.

- A. G.

BRANCH NEWS

The first branch of The Scienceers was established last month in Clearwater, Florida. It was founded by Carlton Abernathy as a result of correspondence with the Secretary of the main organization in New York.

The Clearwater club is known as Scienceers Branch 1. Its first official meeting was held on August 5th; and the following officers were elected: Carlton Abernathy, President; Wallace Dort, Vice-Pres.; Stanly Dort, Secretary-Treasurer. Other members are: Ben Cole, Guy Cole, Dewitt Collins, Melvin Fuller, Selvin Fuller, Wallace Fuller, Don Jackson and J. C. Roberts.

Meetings are held once a week. The club maintains a library containing 125 magazines and several books. Purchase of a radio for the entertainment of the members is contemplated.

The progress this branch has made since its establishment is remarkable; and we of the parent organization unite in wishing them continued success.

ASTRONOMICAL MYSTERIES (II)

What Formed the Moon's Craters? Those wide, rather shallow depressions certainly originated in some manner and probably in a very striking or violent manner. But although we have given them names and traced their shadows and have had plenty of chances to watch and speculate upon them, nobody as yet has suggested an explanation that is universally accepted.

A tremendous meteoric bombardment which hit the moon when it was young, say some. A disastrous explosion from the inside, like our volcanic eruptions, say others. Still, the pock-marked face of the moon is unexplained.

- ALLEN GLASSER.

X-RAYS

It was recently announced that the radius of the universe is approximately 9,500,000,000,000,000,000 miles. We intend to check up on this.

"Who was the greatest inventor?"
"An Irishman named Pat. Pending."

We're waiting for some halfwit to ask whether the liquid on the ninth planet should be called "Pluto water."

HERB: "I hear you have an Inferiority Complex."

PHIL: "Not me; I don't go in for them high-class cars."

Great jokes from little chestnuts grow.

Charlie Weiner is supposed to be an associate editor of this paper, but he was evidently too busy to contribute anything to this issue. Perhaps he's still working on that non-skid pretzel-bender we mentioned a while ago.

Anyway, we thank those who helped make this issue our best yet! - A. G.

CAN YOU EXPLAIN IT?

Do you know why a strong wind "whistles a tune" of changing pitch as it passes a corner?

When a strong wind blows past a corner the air is set in rapid vibration by the corner of the building, just as when air is blown across the open end of an empty bottle. As the velocity of the wind changes, the frequency of the vibrations will also change and the result will be a whistling sound ranging from a low note to a shriek.

- M. W.

NOTE: One of our features, the Science Fiction Quiz, was crowded out of this issue, but will appear next month.

