

EMBER #31 -56
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 1129 N. 33rd Street
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 A weekly sheet or 2
 or 3 of news, views,
 & advice. A number
 after your name on
 the address indicates
 the issue with which
 your sub expires. The
 paid circulation for
 this is only 36.
 Ember is a Frontier
 Publication

Tucker's **THE CHINESE DOLL** sells
 to English market; his 2nd book
 now being read by Rinehart, NYC

Cassells and Co., Ltd., of London
 have accepted "The Chinese Doll", a
 mystery book by Wilson Tucker (Bob
 to the fans) for publication some-
 time this summer. Cassells' have
 grabbed the option on Tucker's next
 two books.

The Detective Book Club has not yet
 decided when to distribute the "Doll"
 to its members. It probably won't be
 used before April at the earliest.
 2nd book is called "Who Owns You?"

Embersearch.....

Eisner sends
 clips reminding
 him of "Solution
 Unsatisfactory".
 "Roads Must Roll"
 The first is the
 Canada death-
 scare story, and
 deals with city
 streets that move
 people, not vehi-
 cles. The latter is
 the subject of a
 16mm sound film
 entitled "Life
 Stream of the City"

Journal Reporting...

There is a group of young fellows
 in Glendale working on rockets, calling
 themselves Reaction Research, Inc. I
 believe that James Hummel, a (former?)
 member of LASFS, is an officer (pos-
 sibly vp). They got several writeups
 in the Los Angeles papers a little bit
 ago. Also they publish a bulletin, a
 larger mag and other misc. material, &
 have projected for future publication
 a resume of their 4 years of work.

Gale Moreton, another LASFS member,
 is now an attendant at the Griffith
 Park Planetarium. He went over to Low-
 ell Observatory for 3 weeks work on ob-
 servation and the like.

"The Griffith Observer", monthly of
 the planetarium, has carried 4 articles
 in a series on space travel & such. By
 Dinmore Alter, director and former Ar-
 my colonel. The first, in the Jan, 1946
 issue, was "Atoms, Bombs, and the Moon".
 Second, Sept. 46, "To the Moon?". Third,
 Nov. 46, "Living on the Moon". Fourth is
 in the current, Jan. 47 issue, and is called
 "Space Travel Fantasy". This one has
 a drawing showing the pattern than an
 Earth-Moon rocket would make in space.

The Jan. 47, Fortune has 2 excellent
 articles: "Astro-Physics" and "The Uni-
 verse: 1947 Models" with plenty of col-
 ored illustrations.

Pageant for Feb, 47, has an article
 by Paul Zucker on "The Artist Explores
 the Mysterious" with pictures of weird
 subjects from Signorelli to Grogz.

"English 'A Matter of Life & Death'
 is technicolor fantasy film 'Stairway
 to Heaven'. -Fja.

Horror stories are now invading the
 British slicks. The English Lilliput
 has such a story, a brief tale of col-
 legiate pranks and their tragic ending
 in the January 1947 issue. The story
 entitled "The Strange Story of the Bell
 Tower", by James Dowdell, concerns a
 young college student, a dabbler in the
 occult, who accepts a dare to remain
 all night in the bell tower of the col-
 lege chapel, reputed to be haunted. --
 Tigrina. Ackerman reports the same
 says in the same issue that there is
 debunking of Ghost Rockets over Sweden.
 entitled "Snow on Their Tails?".....

Embersearch #1

Every so often Ember will take a very
 brief poll of its readers, not in the
 hope of getting any significant facts
 but more in the way of ascertaining a
 brief portion of a trend that might be
 going anywhithway. #1 project requires
 a fraction of your time and it. Will
 you cooperate? This is all you have to
 do. take a penny postcard and list on
 it all the books, magazines, pamphlets
 which you are actively engaged in run-
 ning through the continued process of
 reading. If you have not touched a
 certain book within the last two weeks
 we will consider this book as not be-
 ing actively read. Names will not be
 mentioned in the Emberreport, only names
 of books, frequencies, etc. List materi-
 al in any field.

...on atomic drive continued: (If you will remember, Stanley had just reached an estimate of 10,000 miles per second for the velocity of the disintegration products between two masses below critical mass, one a fission cylinder, the other a 'doughnut', now on with the story:) For simplicity we suppose the rocket is initially motionless out in space, with no air resistance and no gravitational field to bother with. Since we have such a high exhaust velocity to play with, let's be ambitious and assume that we will integrate enough U-235 in the power plant to give the rocket a velocity of 100 miles per second. First we'll want to know how much mass must be in the form of fission fragments at 10,000 mps. To find this, we use the well-known exponential or 'Rocket' equation

$$M_0 / M_r = \exp (V_r / V_e) \quad \text{in which}$$

M_0 is the mass of the rocket at the start and M_r is its mass when it has reached the velocity V_r . V_e is the exhaust velocity. We have given

$$V_e = 10,000 \text{ mps} \quad \text{and} \quad V_r = 100 \text{ mps} \quad \text{whence}$$

the rocket equation gives

as the 'mass ratio':

$$M_0 / M_r = e^{0.01} = 1.01$$

This means that

to impart a velocity of 100mps to a 100-lb rocket, for example, we would have to shoot off one pound of fission fragments at 10,000mps. On the surface, this seems extremely favorable; it is certainly a very modest fuel consumption, as compared with a rocket burning chemical fuels, e.g. V-2 with mass ratio of 3.21 for the attainment of a vastly lower V_r . There are, however, some jokers to this proposition which we ought to consider before we plan on taking off for the moon along with Farnsworth and company. (To be continued next issue when the jokers are discussed)

REM-EMBER #2 by Ben Singer

Printed Zines, Past, Present, & Future...

Through the able eyes of Sam Moskowitz, many of you have seen the struggles, the rewards of early fandom. Sam's 'The Immortal Storm', currently appearing in Fantasy Commentator, has taken me back to the days of the printed zine, to the days of SF Correspondent, SF Fan, and back further yet to Fantasy Magazine's days of glory. Things of the past are these titles; nor are there now printed magazines to take their place. All fanzines now are either mimeo'd, hecto'd, or Ditto'd. The advantages of a printed zine are obvious.

I have an idea for a printed zine that I believe could be made to pay for itself. It would be jointly sponsored by N3F and any interested fan. It would have 28 pages; would sell for 10 or 15 cents. Featuring the best names of Fandom, several thousand copies could be printed. The title could be Fantasy Reader. The ads would pay a good share of the costs. It could even become the N3F official organ.

Random Notes

Anyone interested in the proposed at the left, write Singer at 3242 Terrey, Detroit 6, Michigan.... Jack Speer asks: "Wouldn't it be nicer to abbreviate Bob Stein's name some way?" !!.... Heroldo de Esperanto for 15 Dec 46 had an absorbing article translated from Exodni Obroda on A. Slotin, first freewill martyr to atomic radiation death in the history of science -4E.... Tucker's 1946 Y zine index is almost ready to mail; the same envelope with it will be the 5th issue of the Bloomington Newsletter. This index is free, and as long as a copy remains, it may be had for the asking. -BF.... Joquel's excellent weekly review of atomic news The Atomic Age is definitely folded, as well as its proposed quarterly successor, Atomic World. -AJ.... Edgar Allan Poe's series psychological thriller, 'The Hound of Montillado', has been recorded Decca on 4 ten-inch discs. Principal voice is that of movies' sinister Man, Sydney Greenstreet. -Fja.... of Ackerman's VOM will be the last FME.... James Blish manages VAPA. -F

As promised in the last Feb, here are some remarks from Embereaders directed toward Derleth's criticism of the Kennedy Fantasy Review Poll results. I line to say their pieces, we have Redd Boggs, Jack Speer, D.B. Thompson, and Joe Kennedy himself.

"August Derleth should be informed that Kennedy's poll was for...determining the best authors of 1946 only - not of all-time. This explains the apparent victory of science-fictioners therein. Had it been an all-time poll, such weirdists as Blackwood, Lovecraft - and even Derleth - might have placed. As it is, Bradbury (at his best, primarily a weird writer) made an excellent showing, for after all Weird Tales had only 6 issues in 1946 while ASF had 12, plus the issues of the other sf mags." --Boggs

"Derleth is irritating. His statement that the poll was weighted with science-fictioners implies negligence or dishonesty on Joe's part, when the truth is simply that it was a poll of fandom, which happens to contain more s-f than weird devotees. But more, there is implicit in Derleth's criticism an assumption either that there are more devotees of weird fiction than science-fiction, or that regardless of their smaller numbers weird fiction addicts should have polls weighted in their favor because their tastes are obviously superior." --Speer

"Mr. Derleth makes a statement which is true, but highly misleading. Kennedy's poll is heavily weighted with science-fictioners, for the very reason that a rather overwhelming majority of active fans are science-fictionists, and only a small but erudite and prolix minority are weirdists. After all, the group started as a science-fiction group, and only the advent of Unknown Worlds succeeded in rousing some interest among us in the older and stiffer component of the 'fantastic' fiction field. ([!]) Mr. Derleth once made the dogmatic statement that it is a fact that weird fiction is superior as literature to s-f. The statement is ridiculous, since there is no factual basis for it, nor any possibility of such a basis. Had he said 'In the opinion of a majority of recognized literary critics, weird fiction is superior to science fiction', then he would have been making a factual statement, or at least, a statement capable of proof or disproof. Opinions do not constitute factual data, no matter what dictionary or system of logic one employs." --Thompson

"I should like to remind Derleth that no fan poll can obtain complete accuracy, for not until somebody figures out a way to contact every single fantasy, weird, and sf reader in the world will a poll be truly representative! Doing the next best thing, The Review polled sci/fandom - a field which, while it includes a crosssection of humanity running from devotees of the occult to nuclear physicists, is admittedly somewhat slanted toward SFans rather than weird and horror-story lovers. Inspection of the complete poll results ((Ember printed just the highlights, with the complete results due soon from Kennedy. Write and ask him for The Fantasy Review)) should show that the weird and supernatural elements were very much in evidence. Many weirdists received ballots -- if they lacked enuf interest to vote for their favorites, this can hardly be blamed on the poll-taker. It is not surprising that really unusual and exceptional volumes like Ady in Time & Space and the Best of SF should be more memorable in a classification which was monopolized by good, bad, and indifferent weird material. No poll pleases everybody; Derleth being a weirdist -- and a pro publisher of the stuff -- can hardly be expected to show much sympathy for sternal elements; at that, he should be gratified that 3 out of the top 5 books of the year were Arkham publications. The poll would draw many more accusations of inaccuracy if it continued middle next page) page 3

Ember: As of Ember #30 the following
 top list of 51 people who have at
 least 1 point in the Ember book prize
 contest:

1. Edna Rogers	7 1/2	6. Rothman	4 1/2
2. Elzine	7 1/2	7. Tullis	4
3. Robinson	7	8. Spear	4
4. Johnson	6	9. Robinson	3
5. Stanley	6	10. Klingbiel	3

Only one more month remains to boost
 your point score. Each short news item
 submitted nets you 1 point; longer
 pieces in the nature of articles
 will be awarded 1 point. Each 50¢ sub-
 scription nets you 1 point, and if
 you can talk someone into becoming an
 reader, that's another full point.

Special this week. Adam and Eve, a
 satirical novel by John Krakine, will
 go for what Ember paid for it, post-
 paid: 75¢. The book is in fine con-
 dition except for a wrinkled back-
 board; has dust jacket.

Also two little
 books of sea stories, some fantasy,
 by Morgan Robertson. Both of these
 will go for 20¢ apiece postpaid. The
 books are about the size of wartime
 novels; the stories are fine.

(Kennedy's letter continued from page 3) body like a volcano or "volcano-
 top" -- which isn't impossible if weirdists were pulled almost any-
 way, and while yours truly cannot claim complete impartiality, I believe the
 Fantasy Review poll is about as accurate an indication of fanboys' opinion
 of recent of projected tabulation is likely to be." --Kennedy.

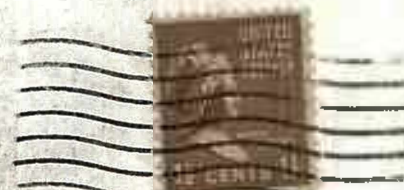
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D.B. Thompson says: "Elzine was a
 weird fiction, and often makes all
 sense in her reviews, for certain
 omissions in the stories. If she
 ghoststory is punk, I'm fairly sure
 that the majority of fans who aren't
 aren't in the know, would consider
 a stinkeroo, because, unlike T, we
 aren't willing to make allowances
 for imperfections in a weirdie, as
 is."

I've read three books in the
 field that I think good during the
 year -- "The Herring Court", "The
 Running Water", and "To Walk the
 But the last two could as well be
 ed as science fiction, or at worst,
 pseudo-science, since the author in-
 sents speculative answers to the
 laws, said answers being based on
 entific that. I'm somewhat critical
 to Derleth's appraisal of the last
 incidentally. Does he consider them
 or not?"

Recent press release from Hollywood
 veals cute funny starlet, Laurel
 Donne (latest real name; real name
 MacDonald) is engaged to an Edward
 Hepner III. Caption says Laurel is
 singer in "My Wild Irish Rose".

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