



# EMBER #23

Weekly journal of news, views, and mus  
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Leaders in Ember contest before this issue went to 'press': Norm Stanley - Nic Carr-14; Redd Boggs-14; Tigrina-1 Bob Stein- 1; Sam Russell- 1.

R.S. Richardson, of Ft. Wilson, was approached by Ember for straight news items on new developments in astronomy. In the same letter he was asked about rockets, etc. The following quick reply was received: "I am an inactive member of the Glendale Rocket Society and hold some sort of honorary membership in Mr. Farnsworth's rocket organization. My activities, however, are limited strictly to paper and pencil. I have no yen whatever for making an actual trip beyond the atmosphere. I would be glad to supply straight news items on new developments in astronomy. Although I can't promise they will always be worded very smoothly writing them out directly this way. Here is one that may be of interest."

ATTENTION MR. FARNSWORTH! by R. S. Richardson

Although tremendous strides forward have been made in rocketry itself during recent years, yet the figures quoted for journeys to the moon and planets are still back in the Jules Verne era. Apparently writers have simply gone on copying from each other without bothering to make new calculations. For example, in all the books and articles the time given to reach the moon is about 100 hours. This figure is based upon the lowest velocity that will just attain the moon. Now we are never going to flit from planet to planet using these minimum requirements, as the following considerations will show:

A rocket starting from the surface of an airless earth with an initial speed of 6.879 miles per second will reach the distance of the moon in 88 hours 55.2 minutes. But a real rocket would be given a high velocity about 200 miles above the surface when it is in vacuum. Now let us step up the initial velocity just a little at this elevation and see what happens. An initial velocity only one-tenth of a mile per second greater (6.99 mps) cuts the time down to 26 hours 41 minutes. A speed of 7.09 mps reduces it to 23 hours 32 minutes. And 8.00 mps makes the journey only 13 hours 24 minutes long!

Corresponding reductions would be made in the times to other planets. These are hyperbolic velocities but what of that? The ellipse is an economical curve that will do for slow freight, but the hyperbola is the curve by which we will finally reach the planets.



Harley Sachs announces that the Jr.BEM are publishing a Fan Book called The Man from Blueview, featuring a 9000 word short by himself. It is due in about a week at 15¢; is mimeoed with Ditto cover and printed flyleaf. Also STEPHEN is due out at about the time you read this. \*\*\* SLAN, a slim volume at \$2.50 is out from Arkham House. \*\*\* Current LIFE has interesting article on bacteriological warfare - R.Stein. \*\*\* Fanne Laurel Lee Donnell now working Warner's "My Wild Irish Rose". -41. \*\*\* "Dhaotwha? Remember? If that word means anything to you, it means a lot to us all. Maybe I can awaken some latent memory in you. Your mind may hold the Rosetta Stone to recapture a lost secret of time and space..." These are the opening words of a novelet by "Robert Clark" which Editor Carnell will present in a future issue of New Worlds. Doc Lowmance & Jack Eryan are said to lurk behind this pseudo-science sermon, which may be hailed (while its collaborators are stoned) as a poor fan's "Moon Pool". - Forrest Ackerman. \*\*\* Jack Speer received a letter from an Angelono which poses a problem in missing persons with a "classic understatement": "Tuesday Al Ashley walked out of the house. Somebody shouted after him 'Where you going, Al?' and he answered, over his shoulder, 'Battle Creek', hopped in his car and took off. Since he has not returned, it is probable he went to DC. He took no luggage or anything. Virgil says he looked like he was going down to the corner drugstore for a pack of cigarettes. This is odd of Al." \*\*\* Norman Stanley calls our attention to a medical newsmote in Science Illustrated of last June, page 92 which tells briefly of longevity work done by Dr. Thomas S. Gardner on mice who were fed large quantities of nucleic acid. Gardner is an "old-time fan". \*\*\* Redd Doggs says that J. Francis McComas has written stf under the name of Webb Marlowe, and one yarn is included in Adv. in Time and Space. \*\*\* Stein tells me that Robert Bloch is in the hospital for a varicose vein operation. Meeting of the Neoterics was held last Wed. and Bloch, Fredric Brown, Larry Martin, and Stein were present at Bloch's house.

Chan Davis, recent contributor to ASF, sends Ember an advertisement which he received, describing the wonders that might be found within a book called In the Atomic Age. He says he has not seen the book, but thinks it might be full of 'malarkey' as the advertisement indicates. Why did he send this to Ember? His own words: "In view of Ember's preoccupation with malarkey, I thought you might be interested." The malarkey in the book appears to be electronic wave barrages, flying wing, undersea supercarriers, atomic rocket bomb, floating iceberg carrier base, germ bombs, etc. By coincidence a letter from Art Widner that same day brought a clipping from the Boston Globe, Sept.26, describing a 'flying sub' or as the Navy calls it, a submersible aircraft, which will be jet-powered in air and other drive for underwater travel. This type of craft is advertised in the Chan Davis circular. Well, Davis to his own opinion and definition of malarkey; I've bumped into such dogmatists before -- like the chemist I knew who refused to believe that the elements were 'evanescent', in fact, hadn't even read about such things even though getting a degree in chemistry. Now I know another PhD in chemistry who is still figuratively pooh-poohing the airplane, and he keeps pooh-poohing himself right out of the head chair in the department because he has the imagination and initiative of a snowbound snail. Ember will continue in its usual vein, Mr. Davis.

Just received from Rusty Hevelin via mimeo sheet: a proposed amendment to the NMF constitution, which is an entirely new constitution designed to replace the old one. It is based, so Rusty says, on the present constitution, a Jack Speer proposal, a Dale Tarr document unpublished, and suggestions picked up around the country on Rusty's tour. Most notable changes are in the Administration section, where the board of four and a chairman picked by themselves are to be the actual and only governing body -- no president and vice-pres.





# QUEST

## AND QUESTION



by phillip a schumann

THE FAN SOLDIER returns from the wars and says to himself and anyone who might be listening, "What manner of men are these?" Thinking he had found the best and worst of humanity in camps and holes and jungles, he finds they were but a cross section of local life (the same thing he had suspected all along), but the local life is more exxagerated. Apparently, says he, the light won't dawn until the day after the bomb's last tick, when men will wake up to find shreds of himself scattered about the room, if there is a room, and then he might say, "Well, who would have thought it. My didn't they tell me?" Even then, being what he is, he will probably forget it and help kill off what's left, if he happens to be a good tailor and can first sew himself together again.

What can save him? Selfishly, but of more interest, what can save us? One way is to use psychology on him, because he's an irrational creature, and you can't treat him frankly. That isn't so far out of our realm as one might suppose. It seems to me psychology should be a real interest to us, because it is so bound up in our lives... or rather, our lives are bound up in psychology. Our best minds are usually good psychologists, whether they have a degree or not. Take the past few years' Campbellian writers, and some of fandom's best—some have great capacity to understand psychological patterns of behavior. I think our ultimate goal is the same as for a lot of other corridors branching out of psychology—the desire to know the answer to very elementary questions, the greatest being... "why?"—why the stars, why the planets, why life, why the universe, why why why why? We take this outlet in this stage of existence because this is stimulating and imaginative and does not accept the basic philosophy of impossibilities that so many of those about us have adopted. Because science fiction has its fundamental basis in the imagining of things for which we find old legends and new legends, because science fiction imagines things that most men in the history of the world have never imagined, because it is a quest, an outward groping of a tiny hand for the giant unknown of all things—that is why it holds our interest. Obvious, you say, of course obvious we know all that so why repeat and repeat?

Because

it has a point.

If we have imagination and can keep it intact, we can also keep intact our ability to accept our own and other people's realization of their own mind, to perhaps use this ability to envision the future, in terms of logical development of the present, in terms of possibilities. Sometimes the thoughts are false, but as I'll have about the fact, and as I'll have practical imagination of its tremendous possibilities— even so, more so than first seen. We see the way the world is changing, and we see the way the world is changing—

The great difference between science fiction and other forms of literature is that we are primarily interested in exploring the physical world that we haven't yet seen, whereas we are more concerned with the corners of our own minds, however delightful or horrible they may be. Usually we've found more about ourselves in this manner and are better off for it. To know oneself and to give rein to one's dreams makes one realize petty struggles as they are... it makes one see the pride and prejudices and hates and false desires that threaten. If we were all this way, how long do you think war and its attendant monsters would have a chance?

A world of fans would probably not have time for war, and such a conflict, if it came about, would probably be on paper, and eventually settled when one side said, "All right, take the damned two million bales of ackermanura!"

We have taken this way to escape, because we have found no other way, and because we have wanted, not to ignore the world and our surroundings, but to rise above it out of the mud. We can continue to take this way, but while taking it perhaps we can draw from it one part of the solution to the way out for all the earth. At the least we shall remain passive and let others work it out by not aiding the opposition. Since man has erupted these scabs upon his surface, with no help from other creatures, then solutions necessarily lie within his own mind. If he can shine a flashlight upon some of the many old conclusions of a mind over which he has plastered a deer, then he can find the way to end his problems. The serious ones are complex, but you can't really knock one of them down and expect it to die unless you kill the root. Since the root appears to be in the mind, and in the things man are afraid to admit to themselves, then time is lost in attacking structures directly, but should be used in searching for the fungus that gave birth to them.

The basic thing is to find that "WH" and to explain it to another. If another understands, he knows what his problem is, and since the problem is annoying, he can rot it on the vine by destroying the root. It's not impossible. Anything conceivable by even one man becomes a possibility. And we who have dealt for so long with the impossible and improbable, should surely be able to tackle a possibility.

All that would have to be done is to convince two persons of the stupidity of universal actions of the day, and to tell them to perpetuate the chain by telling two each, and getting those two to get two more, ad infinitum. One month convinces millions,

and two months,  
the world!

All this is provided, of course, that Palmer is wrong.!!!