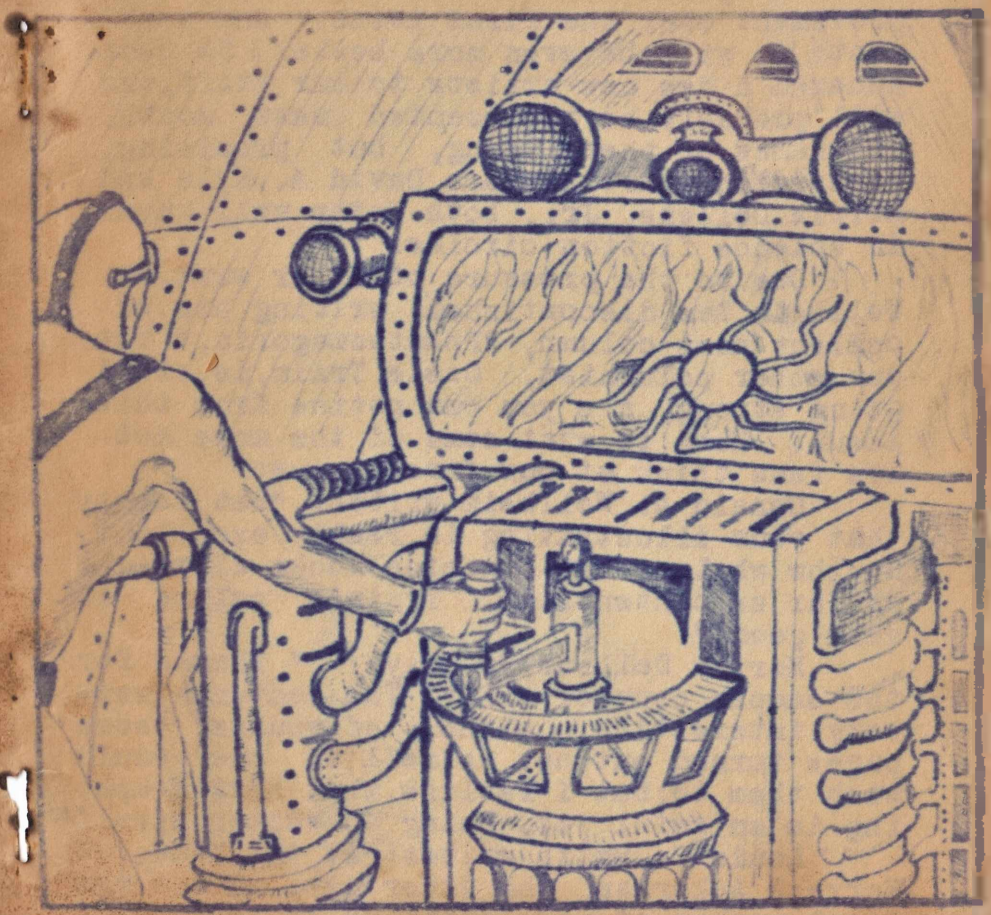
FANTASY FICTION TELEGRAM



ANTICLIMAX

BY

MELVYN MILNE

EDITOR'S PAGE

Well fellows, you have the second issue of the FFT in front of you and I am not but agree that it marks a decided improvement over the first issue. And next month we will be even more better! We have annexed a few new artists to our staff, who will probably be represented next month. The names of these young, but promising, fantascience artists are David A. Kyle and Morris Dollens, Jr., both quite well known in science fiction circles.

Due to the pressure of other work, Mr. Wollheim has discontinued writing his excellent news column, "Phantasmagoria," but our other columnist, Oasis Train, is still going strong, as you can notice from this issue. Here is what some of the more active fans think of our first issue:

Donald A. Wollheim writes: "Let me say that your illustrating is really excellent. On the whole, the magazine looks all right as far as contents go. Train's column is very good."

Morris Dollens, Jr. says: " thanks for the sample copy of "FFT". The contents were very interesting, also, of course, some pages turned out not as well as one would wish them to, but I realize that hektographing is an awful job, being an editor myself."

Louis C. Smith writes: "At the home of Forrest Ackerman, the other day, I saw the first number of your magazine. It looks very good--so here, with this letter, I am sending fifteen cents---for the first, second, and third issues."

With the inevitable request for comment and contributions, I bid you adieu until the next issue.---The Editor/

FANTASY FICTION TELEGRAM

ROBERT A. MADLE, JAMES S. ..... Editor
JOHN V. BALTADONIS ..... Managing Editor
OSWALD TRAIN ..... Literary Editor
MILTON A. ROTHMAN ..... Associate Editor

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ETERNAL WANDERER

BY OSWALD TRAIN

A few things of interest keeps popping up now and then during my wanderings. Recently I had an interesting experience in Leary's Book Store--the oldest in Philadelphia, and now celebrating its 100th. anniversary. I asked one of the clerks, an elderly man, if he had any of Merritt's books in stock. The answer was no, but I learned a lot of interesting things. Many people, both young and old, ask for Merritt's stories, the most sought after-being "The Moon Pool," and "The Ship of Ishtar." His books sell out as fast as they get them in stock. They haven't had "The Moon Pool" for years and the only one they get with any regularity is "Seven Footprints to Satan."

The clerk tried for two years to get a copy of "The Ship of Ishtar" to read himself. He told me of a forthcoming Merritt book--upon which he is still working-probably. I have had several talks with him since then. I picked up "Cursed," by England, and was just three days behind "The Flying Legion," in book form. I may still get it, though.

Speaking of Merritt, "The Metal Monster" is the only novel from his pen that has not been published in book form. It first appeared in Argosy-All Story, beginning August 7, 1920 issue, and continued for eight weeks. It is one of the longest works of modern science fiction. The story was reprinted in Science and Invention as "The Metal Emperor," beginning October, 1927 and ending in the August, 1928 issue. This reprint is slightly different from the or-

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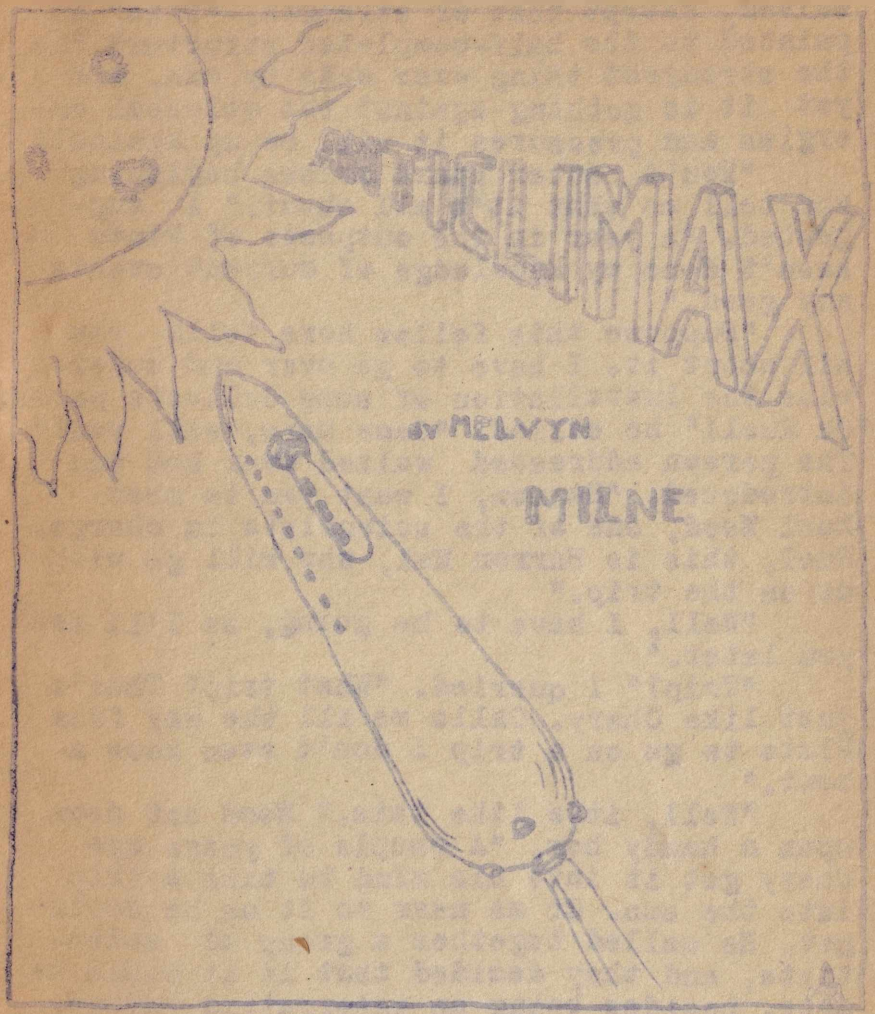


The huge scaffolding towered a hundred feet overhead, and stretched off one thousand feet down to the far end of the hanger. Supported by this scaffold was a tremendous framework of massive kosmolite beams.

"Such strength!" I gasped. "Why, kosmolite is many times stronger than the best steel, and these beams are the largest I've ever seen. For what possible purpose could you want such strength, Burren?"

"Strength!" Burren Chery exclaimed. "I wish I could have a million times more strength than this. All other problems I have solved

solved, except that of strength. "This" he pointed to the half-completed structure, "is the strongest thing ever made by man, and yet it is nothing against the colossal energies and pressures it will be up against."

"You'd better start at the beginning and tell me what it's all about," I suggested. "A year in the outposts of Pluto hasn't done my knowledge of current events any good."

"Suppose this fellow here tells you all about it. I have to go over and supervise the installation of some delicate parts." "Oh Rusl!" he called. "Come here, will you?" The person addressed walked over and was introduced. "Harron, I want you to meet Rusl Wood, one of the scientists in charge. Rusl, this is Harron Mal, who will go with us on the trip."

"Well, I have to be going, so I'll see you later."

"Trip?" I queried. "What trip? That's just like Chery. Calls me all the way from Pluto to go on a trip I don't even know about."

"Well, it's like this." Wood sat down upon a handy box. "A couple of years ago Chery got it into his mind to take a trip into the sun. Or as near to it as he could get. He called together a group of scientists, and they decided that if it could be done, besides being an interesting voyage, it would impart a great deal of information to science.

"With their assurance that they would cooperate with him, Chery set about to make plans for the ship. In building it, many things had to be considered. First in importance. If you want to get anywhere near the sun, is the terrific heat and radiation encountered. This was a big problem, but it was solved by using ordinary ray-screens. You know how these screens are used to nullify lethal rays in warfare. Well, Chery

just extended this principle to apply all wavelengths of radiations, and the result was a screen that would stop all other vibrations from radio waves to cosmic rays, including infra-red, or heat rays.

"Thus the radiated heat was taken care of. But, if a ship dives into the blazing atmosphere of the sun, there will be the heat transmitted directly from the atmosphere to the walls of the ship to deal with. Alpol, the great molecular physicist, invented a device which made the molecules of the walls of the ship unable to vibrate, so that it could not be heated, no matter what temperature was applied to it.

"However, all these devices need as much power behind them as the power they are combatting. We already had atomic power, but to supplement this, a method was devised whereby power could be tapped directly from the radiations of the sun. To do this, a narrow band will be left open in the screen, but since all the radiations coming through will be absorbed by the converters, there will be no danger in this.

"Then, of course, there is the problem of strength. Although this space ship is the strongest thing ever made by man, we are no sure whether it will be enough for the forces we will encounter. Chery wanted to dive a few thousand miles into the very body of the sun, but no structure we can make would withstand the terrific pressures."

"It sounds very interesting, but what are the practical benifits to be gotten from the trip, besides the thrill of going someplace where nobody else has been?"

"Well, there is the theory of atomic energy, which is by no means complete, and [illegible] the secret of energy of matter.

Then there is the study of the structure of the sun, about which there are many controversies. Oh, there are lots of things that can be discovered by a trip like this. There will be recording devices running all the time to collect as much information as possible."

"And I am to be a member of the expedition?"

"Yes, I believe your job will be to keep a detailed log of the journey. This will suplement the movie records, and the graphs made by the various instruments."

"Well, Harron, how do you like the idea of the trip?" I looked up to see Chery striding towards me. "Do you want to go, or should I find somebody to take your place?"

" When do we start?" was my answer.

INTO THE SUN

Space! A vast black emptiness studded with myriads of tiny points of light. Directly in front of the gigantic space ship that had invaded the peace of the void was the sun, a tremendous ball of blinding light. This space vessel was attempting to do what no other object in the history of mankind had done before. To plunge into the fiery atmosphere of the sun and emerge unharmed with a pictorial and graphical record of the trip.

Inside the ship were the tiny bits of living matter that had the audacity to attempt this incredible feat.

Burron Chery looked up from his charts. "Here we are within the orbit of Mercury. In a few hours we will be in the corona of the sun."

"I'm afraid my astronomy is none too good," I confessed. "You'll have to tell me what the corona is."

"Well, you know how our electric lights

work. There is a tube of glass filled with a certain gas, or mixture of glass under low pressure. When a high tension electric current is passed between two electrodes through this gas, a light results. The corona operates the same way. There is a great mass of thin gas thrown off from the sun by light-pressure, and the sun itself acts an electrode, giving off an electric current which excites the gas into luminosity.

"On the earth the corona can only be seen at the time of a total eclipse, but out in space it can be seen whenever the sun is visible."

Following this explanation I wandered away to find amusement elsewhere in the vast ship.

In a couple of hours the sound of a gong echoed through the corridors. Dashing up the hall to the control room I found everything in order. "What was that for?" I demanded.

OH, I forgot to tell you. That signal indicated that we just entered the corona. But you needn't get worried. It spreads out from the sun for millions of miles, and we wont reach the sun for about a half-hour yet. Notice how the surface temperature indicator is acting up. 4000° Centigrade. That's how hot the ship would be if it wasn't for the molecular-vibration dampers and the ray screens."

The ship was now falling freely into the sun at a terrific rate. Cherry gave the order to slow up and flatten out and fall into an orbit around the sun.

Lights flashed on the switchboard indicating that the antigravity generators were beginning to operate.. Great floods of power flowed the atomic energy generators into the gravnetic field machines. The pull of the sun was being completely nullified. More energy was sent through the great power beams, and gradually the pull of the sun

was converted into a push, so that the speed of the ship was gradually lessened.

Chery pressed a button, massive plungers shot to on the power beard, and the ship gave a sudden lurch as the great neutron rockets burst into life. The springs on my chair groaned as the rockets forced the ship slowly, very slowly, into a new course.

Far, far below a great flame of hydrogen gas sprang up. Chery was at once galvanized into furious activity. Shouting orders into microphones, operating controls, and doing the work of two people, he managed to whip the ship into a course which would take us out of the range of the flame, at the expense of much pain on the part of the passengers.

This flame was one of those called "solar prominences". Some of them reached titanic heights, stretching out into space for thousands and thousands of miles. They rose up with terrific speed, this speed being accelerated all the time.

The space ship streaked down with enormous velocity, taking a diagonal course so as to use to the best advantage the pull of the sun, augmented many times by the reversed action of the anti-gravity machines. The neutron rockets were operating with as great pressure as the human frame could stand. It was a race with time!.The flame was shooting up, and the ship scooted out of its way. One touche of the tremendous mass of superheated gas would whirl the ship around like a toy boat on a breaker at the seashore. And all within would be immolated.

The multiple springs on my chair stretched to a dangerous point. My chest seemed covered with lead. I gasped for air with what I thought were my last breaths in those terrible seconds. In the wild stress the tip of the flame seemed to be

upon us; then we seemed to have escaped from its clutch.

I am not sure what happened then. Perhaps a long finger of gas spurted up faster than the main body of the flame, but suddenly a shudder shook the ship; a terrible force pressing on my chest turned around and forced me against the restraining straps of my chair, something struck my head, and everything went black.

LIVING CREATURES!

The next thing I knew was Chery bending over me. When he saw that there was nothing seriously wrong withme, he stood up and wiped his moist brow "We're in a devil of a fix, Harren. The flame struck us after all, jolted evrything inside the ship terribly, and a part of the anti-gravity machinery got loose and wrecked the whole engine room. We're going around the sun in an orbit, and the rockets are not enough to get us loose. Even if they were, we couldn't stand the strain. And to sap it all, our speed is just below the critical speed, and we are slowly falling into the sun. Once we get far below, and our power begins to give out, nothing can save us."

This was bad news indeed. I got up and leaned against a table, staring into the screen of a tele-eye. Although the light from the sun was reduced enormously, all that could be seen in the screen was a mass of blinding radiance.

A motion occured in the corner of the screen. An indefinite mass, slightly darker than the surroundings moved into the field of view. It came nearer, and I was able to see that it was a flexible cylinder with a number of tentacle-like objects protuding from it.

"Barron", I called, "come here! Do you see what I see? What do you make of it?"

"Why," he gasped "it looks like some kind of living creature! But on the sun! And at such temperatures! I would say it was impossible if I didn't see it. But after all, there is no reason to get excited over it. It might be just a mass of denser material that happened to have that shape."

As if to belie his word, several more of these objects floated into view. The similarity of shape, and the manner which the tentacles moved around proved that they were some sort of living animals.

"Looks like I was right the first time." Chery gave a short laugh. "These shapes couldn't be a coincidence. After all, we really don't know what life is, and it is just as reasonable to suppose that it can exist at temperatures of thousands of degrees as it is for our kind of life to be But these creatures must be made of a substance approaching neutronium in density, and they must take their power from solar radiation, just as our ship does. It is hard to tell their size, but they look pretty big, and if they decide to attack the ship, well, I hate to think of what would happen!"

It looked as though the creatures did decide to attack the ship. Tentacles waving wildly, they converged upon us. Just one crack in the wall of the ship would let in the incredibly hot material of the sun, and that would be theend.

Nearer and nearer the creatures came! They were nearly on top of us. One drew a tentacle back preparatory to striking, and swept it swiftly forward!

A cataclysm of varicolored light burst in the center of my brain. A tumult of noise [illegible] my ears, and incoherent sensations converged upon my brain from all parts of my body. . . . . .

With a muttered curse I extricated the headpiece from amid my tangled hair, [illegible] all the pieces for the [illegible]

down." I exclaimed, giving the offending machine a blow that sent it across the table. "It couldn't stop at the beginning of the story, or after it was over, but had to pick the most exciting part!"

THE END

THE PROBABLE MARTIAN

BY Donald A. Wollheim

We rad often in stories supposedly dealing with scientific possibilities, of Martians who are quite human in form and feature, voice, emotions and in short everything else. And as a rule, these pseudo Martians are of the white race, or at least possess the general physiognomy of the white race.

From the point of view of the scientist, what is the case for the physical appearance of a Martian, granting the presence on that world of any intelligent creatures at all? We do know for a fact that there is life on that world. And where there are plants there can be animal. The evidence of the canals, believed in by most astronomers since they have been photographed, indicates to the mind of many, the presence of reasoning, intelligent beings.

In order to find the present appearance of any being on earth, we of course, have to start from ptimeval times and work upwards to determine the results of evolution during all these changing eons. Of course, the science of evolution is very young and undeveloped,

applying the principle now, the best we do is to discover the barest general type of structure that would be highest evolvable on Mars.

The questions of temperatures and atmosphere do not arise here because we are dealing with primeval Mars. No doubt in ancient times, millions of years ago, Mars had a considerable atmosphere and a higher surface temperature. So we can allow the first life stage to have evolved in the planet-wide seas of that time. That of the microscopic, protoplasmic forms. The next stage to follow would be the jellyfish. After that the type known as the Crustacean which had a boneless interior but has a hard shell covering on the outside of its body so as to maintain its form, such as the crab, the lobster, and the varieties and species of each. Also, there would be forms similar to the oyster and some insects. Thus far, because all these creatures appeared to have developed originally in the ocean, there is no hindrance to there developement on Mars.

The next step in evolution is the development of a backbone and an internal skeleton, instead of the fixed and rigid outer skeleton of the crustacean. Our presently held theory is that the backbone was first developed in fish because of the primitive forms having to swim in the swiftly running streams of ancient times. In order to make any headway, a hard bony spine was developed along the back so as to stiffen the fish and prevent it from being crushed and pressed shapeless by the force of the waters. Thus was evolved the first spine and from that all the other systems of bone structure formed in order to maintain shape.

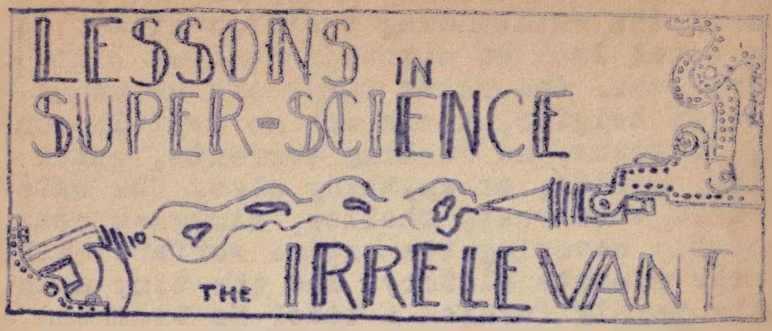
But for Mars this could not be. For

CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE

one of the outstanding features of Mars is the total lack of mountains and any high elevations. And where there are no mountains or heights, there are no swiftly running streams, no rushing torrents, water falls, rapids, or anything else. The waters of Mars were vast, shallow, sluggish seas, probably covering the entire surface early in the planets history. And the tiny moons could hardly furnish a tide. No backbone or eternal skeleton could have evolved. The highest form of Martian life is the Crustacean. No higher could have been evolved. For Mars there could be no lizards, no reptiles, no birds, and above all, no mammals. Indeed, the crustaceans is one of the few forms that could emerge upon dry land at all. Evolution must have stopped there if it followed the Terrestrial parallel at all.

It is highly doubtful whether any intelligence could have appeared among these crustaceans in any appreciable amount until after the drying up process had reached a critical stage. Then, undoubtedly in the fierce struggle for the remaining water and food supply, cunning and intelligence would have made themselves manifest and would have forced their way to the front until finally a true culture appeared upon the planet. In the possible evolution of this culture, all centered upon the fight for water and food. The reason for this culture never to have attempted space flying (for they must be far ahead of us in engineering) is that probably there never has been any sort of creature on that planet that flew. The thought of traversing the air (or worse still, space) is probably inconceivable. When and if, mankind should find out for a fact the features of a Martian, let them waste no idle thoughts on human appearances. Instead, let us look for some sort of higher development of the head brain.

THE END



by MILTON A. ROTHMAN

There have been arguments and discussions in the various science fiction readers departments. Smith argued with Campbell, readers picked stories apart and were picked apart themselves, but never in the history of science fiction was there such a furor raised as by the "Irrelevant." This story was a direct challenge to science. The author deliberately violated conservation of energy and then told science to do something about it. Science---meaning the science fiction readers---thought it knew something. But "The Irrelevant" is still irrelevant.

The entire problem revolves around one basic principle of physics. This is the statement that work equals force times distance. That is, if a body is pushed with a force of one pound, and, while being pushed, travels a distance of one foot, then the amount of work done is called one foot pound. Some people give the definition of the foot pound as the amount of work done in raising one pound for a distance of one foot. This is perfectly all right, but is merely contained in the more general definition: the work done by a force of one pound acting through a distance of one foot. It can be seen that it requires a force of one pound to raise an object weighing one pound, but it requires less force to move the same object horizontally. Thus, less work id done in moving a body horizontally than in moving it vertically. However, the

general definition puts aside all question of weight, and only considers the actual force which is applied upon the body.

Suppose we take a theoretical case of a body floating about in space, with no friction or any other forces acting upon it. Now if we can apply a force upon this body, an acceleration will be produced. This acceleration equals the force divided by the mass. (Derived from Newton's second law of motion; force equals mass times acceleration.) This means that the velocity, or distance per time unit, of the body will be increasing at a definite rate.

If the acceleration is ten feet per second per second, the distance traversed during the first second id five feet, during the second second is fifteen feet, during the third second, twenty five feet during the fourth second, thirty five feet etc. Ten feet per second is added during every second.

Now, suppose we substitute these distances in the equation mentioned above: w = f x d. Let us say the force applied is constantly 100 pounds. Then:

During the first second,
w = 5 ft. x 100 lbs. = 500 lbs.(ft.lbs.)
During the second second,
w = 15 ft. x 100 lbs. = 1500 lbs." "
During the third second,
w = 25 ft. x 100 lbs. = 2500 lbs." "
During the sixtieth second,
w = 595 ft. x 100 lbs. = 59500 ft. lbs.

Let us see what this means. We have been burning a constant amount of fuel in order to get out hundred pounds of force. But we have been getting an increasing amount of work out of this same amount of fuel. Pretty soon we will be getting more work out of the fuel than is theoretically possible per unit of time. It is paradoxical, but that is what we get out of the equation. If the equation is correct, then

SOMETHING is wrong somewhere else. Perhaps the equation. . . . .

Perhaps some of you have already discovered that what I have blown about in the above few paragraphs is nothing but the problem stated in "The Irrelevant." Perhaps you couldn't understand it when you read the story, but it is all clear now, scientists have a way of making things appear difficult which are really simple. All this hubbub and fuss over one little equation. Perhaps, starting from the simple exposition given here you can think of a few strange things concerning that equation when used for a body under acceleration. In the next article I am going to tell about a few of the things I have figured out about "work equals force times distance."

In the meantime, remember. . . . "What one fool had done, another can."

Ancient Simian proverb.

THE ETERNAL WANDERER----Cont. from page 4

iginal version and is profusely illustrated by the famous Paul.

Tom Hill, our member who recently returned to Wisconsin, has had a great number of magazine stories bound. They were swell, too.

There are many people who believe that "Tarzan of the Apes" was Edgar Rice Burroughs' first story. It was his first book. "A Princess of Mars" was his first story. The second and third were, respectively, "The Outlaw of Torn," and "Tarzan of the Apes."

Carl S"anson made elaborate plans during the winter of 1930-31 for a new magazine, to contain reprints of classics almost exclusively. "The Moon Pool," "Master of the Cylinder," "Draft of Eternity," "Hubbub of Space," and many more were slated.

But alas, at the last minute Munsey refused to give the rights and the affair fell through. Swanson kept pegging away, though, and did get permission for a number of stories and did get permission for a number of stories by Rousseau and several others--he git in communication with the authors. This second attempt, to be named "the Galaxy," was announced to a great number of fans, but fell through because of lack of support. I hope Swanson makes another try at it sometime, and I wish him success. No one can say he didn't try.

WATCH FOR "THE BRAIN" BY OSWALD TRAIN. A THRILLING STORY CENTERED ABOUT AN IDEA NEW TO SCIENCE FICTION. WILL BE PUBLISHED IN BOOKLET FORM BY COMET PUBLICATIONS, 1700 FRANKFORD AVE., PHILADELPHIA, PENNA.

SCIENCEFICTIONISTS! To get a copy of the FAN send me your name and address. the SCIENCE FICTION FAN IS a printed job, containing stories, columns, articles, interviews and autobiographies by your favorites in the s-f field. A monthly column is FANFARADE by Donald A. Wollheim. Running now is a story THE CYCLE by Mervyn Evans, the associate editor of the fan. The first issue featured an interview with Jack Williamson, one of the foremost s-f authors and the second issue featured an autobiography of Clark A. Smith, and the third carried an autobiograpy of J. Russell Fearn. Other headliners are scheduled for fusure issues. So to be sure and not miss any, send to: OLON F. WIGGINS, 616 21st. St., Denver, Colorado!"

NOTE--The new address of the SCIENCE FICTION FAN is 2251 Welton Street, Denver, Colorado.
