

Oddly enough, after I'd finished the yarn I discovered that the paradox was still there. I mentioned the matter to Pete, but he seemed to think "paradox" was the place where Adam and Eve lived, so I got little help from that direction. Sometimes I wonder whether Mr. Manx is quite as smart as he pretends to be. Oh, well . . .

Finally, I'd like to thank the readers for the very kind reception they have given the Pete Manx tales; and I trust they will continue to like them. Especially since a prophet is without honor in his own country, and neither my wife nor my daughters regard me as a literary light. My recently-acquired granddaughter has nothing at all to say about it, unless "glub" may be taken as a criticism.

MERCURY EXPEDITION NUMBER 1

AND now, pyramids on Mercury! Gordon A. Giles continues the scientific search for the answer to the greatest riddle of all time—the enigma of pyramids on four planets of the System!

We'd like to know what's behind 'em, too—even if we have to follow "Via" Expeditions to every one of the nine planets!

Hello, readers! Via Expedition Number Three reporting, from Mercury. Giles at the keys.

After Mars and Venus, the next logical and nearest planet to visit is Mercury, in looking ahead to interplanetary exploration. Thus, in this story *Via Mercury*, my intrepid crew of Columbuses is sent there. Only four are left now of the original ten who first set foot on another planet than Earth—Mars. Captain Atwell, Markers, Parletti and Gillway. I hope you're as glad to see those names again as I am to continue them in a new exploit. Tarnay and Karsen are veterans of the Venus Expedition, and here's four new men.

Which of these ten will have to sacrifice their lives in the venture? Five men found a grave on Mars, four on Venus. How many of these men on Mercury will have to make the supreme sacrifice? Perhaps the answer will surprise you, when you read the story.

To go over a few points, I'm aware that astronomical authority today states there is little if any atmosphere on Mercury. But remember, it is merely a statement of theory—and theories change. The theory is that Mercury's light gravity would be unable to hold an atmosphere, especially under a blazing sun only 36 million miles away, which would heat all gases beyond the escape velocity.

But what of the eternal Night Side, where gases have frozen, and which must circulate around the planet because of libration? Direct observation tells little. Earth's atmosphere would be hard to detect from Mercury's distance. Most of Earth's air is packed within ten miles of the surface. Compare ten miles with the diameter of 8000 miles. Visually, Earth's fairly extensive atmosphere would be only a thin thread circling the surface. Mercury might have a still thinner ring, absolutely invisible from Earth, but nevertheless there. I rather think no astronomer has the right to say a planet has or hasn't an atmosphere. The only way to find out really is by going there—as my crew has.

About life. Only the so-called Twilight Zone of Mercury could bear life comparable to ours. But it's possible for a silicic form to withstand the terrific temperatures of the Day Side. It's not impossible, anyway.

I go into these things rather defensively, in that I've always tried to make the "Via" stories as realistic as possible. I try not to violate present-day knowledge any more than necessary for story value. I think the Mercury here presented isn't too far from what it might actually be.

Now the pyramids. I imagine you expected them. The pyramids have become the running thread, the common denominator, of all the "Via" stories. I hope you don't feel,

(Concluded on page 124)

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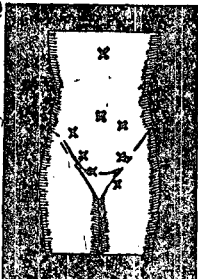
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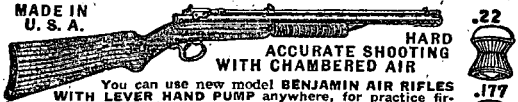


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(Concluded from page 123)

though, that I'm unnecessarily prolonging the agony. That is, about why the Martians built them, and why the Martians died out? But from the viewpoint of realism, would the answer come quickly? All the misty civilizations of the past on Earth have been pieced out only through years and years of research by thousands of inquiring minds. Certainly my crew shouldn't in one stroke decipher all the enigmatic Martian records and blithely tell all about the Martian Age. They'd better not. Or I might not have the chance to write more "Via" stories!

FAIR OF THE WORLDS

PREDICTING the trends of the future is a scientific writer's job. But, more than that, he has to extend his imagination and show us how the future will improve on the present. Time marches on—and we'd all like to know how. Henry Kuttner's Hollywood-on-the-Moon series, for example, portray vividly the problems confronting the movie-makers of tomorrow. And in last month's issue of T.W.S., Arthur J. Burks painted a captivating picture of the West Point of the future, based, of course, on the great traditions of that fine institution.

Rounding out our saga of "flashes of the future," Manly Wade Wellman contributes THE WORLDS OF TOMORROW, his conception of a Fair of the Worlds, destined to come about some day, which will represent all the inhabited planets in the Solar System. We're all for Wellman's preview of tomorrow's Fair. But do we have to wait until the Thirtieth Century?

The inspiration for this yarn is fairly obvious—what fan or writer of science fiction hasn't wondered, while roaming the World's Fair out Flushing way, what the fairs of the future will be like? Not only nations and races, but planets, will be represented there; many diverse world-peoples, with the most widely assorted personalities and motives, will be thrown close together.

I couldn't look into every heart at this fair, but I could look into a few, shifting my gaze again and again. I found them not all good nor all bad, any more than real folk are. Quickly I roughed out these main characters, and after that there was a lot of discussion, with editors and other writers, before the story itself was written. This is more a character yarn than anything I have done in a long time; and I am sorry that my oft-urged dream of universal peace seems very, very flimsy at present. Maybe it will truly come in the Thirtieth Century.

In this work, again, I'm trying to give another glimpse of the future I see; that is, in a series of stories I offer the same conception of various planetary races, civilizations and characters. One or two fans object to this, and a rather larger group like it: I will be glad of reactions to this system of writing science fiction—not a bunch of sequels, as regards characters, but rather a group of revisits to the same Mars or Venus or Jovian system.

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THE READER SPEAKS (Continued from page 121)

up more.

Well so much for the stories—most were superb and the worst were excellent. Keep up the work and stay on top!

As for the illustrations—all are good and especially the interior drawings, which smack of the oldtime science-fiction illustrations. As for the "Out of the Depths" cover illustration—couldn't you have made the background azure like a real sky? We don't need a gaudy cover on T.W.S. Nevertheless though—the cover was grand!

Contests of any kind bring the readers closer to the mag, and its staff. We have all bombarded you with amateur attempts at story writing, and we like the contest and the advantages it offers the readers. We also like the contest readers' prize stories—it makes us feel good to know that one of us has crashed the printed page. We hereby vote for you to continue the AMATEUR CONTEST and try to give us a story every single month. Also, ask for more cover contests—even a picture that you ask the readers to write a story about. We await "The Impossible Highway," with paper and pen—hoping that the prize will be the illustration for "Out of the Depths." We want to win that particular drawing for our den.—Opelousas, La.

FIRST LETTER

By Frank W. Klos, Jr.

Congratulations on your latest issue of T.W.S. I've been reading your magazine for many years but I've never written to tell you my opinion. Your mag is superb in every detail except for a few items—namely:

A: No Penton and Blake stories for ages! Has Mr. Campbell gone out of business, or what has happened to him?

B: Not enough illustrations by Alex Schomburg. In my estimation, he is one of the best illustrators on your present staff. This new artist, Murphy, is o.k., too. And please give Paul a chance now and then.

C: No trimmed edges. Surely T.W.S. ranks with the best.

That's all the brickbats I have at the present. Now for a few laurels:

First, your group of authors is practically impossible to beat and ditto with the artists. Second, your special scientificfiction novel section is a sight for sore eyes. For years we fans have dreamed of such a thing. Third, your amateur contest rates tops with me. Some of those amateurs spring stories that make some of the old stand-bys look sick.

Let's see more of Pete Manx and Tony Quade, the Abbott family and Gerry Carlyle. Please, also, get Gordon A. Giles to tear off a few more "Via" yarns. And while you're at it, get some more stories by Jack Williamson, Ross Rocklyne, Eando Binder and Warner van Lorne, please.

That's what you might call a fan's prayer, so please hearken to my pleas for I'm sure many other fans will back me up in those requests.—398 McCulloch Street, Wheeling, W. Va.

(Mr. John W. Campbell, Jr., now edits a rival scientificfiction magazine. Schomburg and Paul will be represented in early issues. A "Via" yarn in this issue. A Gerry Carlyle novel coming soon.—Ed.)

LIKES NEW YORK-ER

By D. B. Thompson

Ratings for August: 1—"The Impossible Highway"—a fine story of its type, and, especially for a contest. 2—"Pebbles of Dread." 3—"No Man's World"—not one of Kuttner's best, but still good. 4—"The Secret of Anton York." 5—"A Problem in Diatronics." 6—"There Was No Paradise." 7—"Ice Over America."

None of the above compare with "The Seven Sleepers," "Day of the Titans" or "Parallel in Time," for example.

The current Anton York story is much bet-

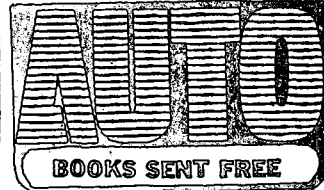
(Continued on page 126)



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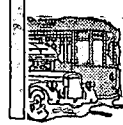
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(Continued from page 125)

ter than its predecessor. It is more logically developed and more consistently written. Carl H. Anderson's letter sums up the shortcomings of T.W.S. pretty thoroughly. I agree with much of what he says; but I heartily disagree with him in the most important matter—that of stories. I think the stories for the first half of 1940 have averaged much better than in the past; the stories he selects as the best so far in 1940 (plus a few others equally good) are among the best T.W.S. has ever printed. Some few of them rate with the best stories in any mag in recent years. I agree that an unduly large percent of the fan letters are pretty sugary. But when he asks for feuds! Shades of asininity, personified! Don't publish serious fan-feud letters! Let the fan-mags handle those, if we must have them, although why we should, I can't imagine. They invariably degenerate into personal recriminations and mud-slinging, and that, certainly, doesn't help scientificfiction! Pardon my vehemence.—3136 Q St., Lincoln, Nebraska.

IS BROWN'S FACE RED!
By Carl H. Anderson

Well, you really should give me a medal or something for the way I pulled you out of the spring doldrums. Modest fellow that I am I would never hint that it was my soot-slinging in the August "Reader Speaks" that began this renaissance. But something did. And my letter was there, and—well—? Frankly, you're looking better. Three fine novels have contributed enormously to this. Though Binder's latest is not equal to its immediate predecessor, "The Three Eternals," its general structure is sound and the action unusual enough to hold the interest. Odd though, isn't it, that master-scientist York still believes that daffy fallacy about snakes charming birds (page 95—bottom column 1). And Vera's face-lifting by Dr. Wesso is certainly an improvement over the acid-pussed version of her in the Dec. issue. Howinell does Tony keep his mind on his work? The Bates opus was mildly amusing for the empty-teenth time. The situation of a villainous scientist doing vile things to winsome maidens, however, makes me want to place the mag in the middle of the room and see how far it can be tramped into the linoleum. But for all that, I still say the yarn was o.k. At least I read every word of it. "The Sun Maker," while by far the best of the three, and your best since January, is a perfect example of what the editorial scissors or the cramped story policy of a mag can do to a superlative yarn. What I'm getting at is that your novels are not novels at all—they are simply novelets that try to cover the scope of a novel and fail. J. W. has probably the most distinctive style in all science fiction, unless it is equalled by Weinbaum and E. E. Smith. So completely his own is this style that the first paragraph of his stories, often the first sentence, reveals the author unmistakably as Williamson (in case you doubt the by-line). But given room he can temper this characteristic touch so that it doesn't drown out the story. In "The Sun Maker" he did not have the room. It is Williamson concentrated—boiled down to the essence. It is true, the Williamson brilliance is there, unaltered, but I can't help thinking how five thousand more words would have helped it. Lengthen your "novels." They'll improve. And THE READER SPEAKS is really beginning to speak instead of babble. Of course this couldn't be the Anderson influence. Too soon for that. Maybe it's just a case of a thing having to rise when it can go no lower. I've been relatively easy so far, but don't go settling back in that swivel chair, yet, my friend. For the scent of the covers remains unchanged, filling the air with the same rank odor of pollution and decay as ever. Upon reaching the newsstand, I received the odd impression that the staff must have been con-

ducting a skunk-skinning contest in the back room. I've come to the conclusion that either you don't place any value on the readers' frenzied pleas or else Brown has the kind of a contract I wish I had.

"Foul" and "abominable" are two adjectives which I could have applied to H. V.'s efforts the last time and didn't. But they fit well, and I now apply them. Also "putrid, repetitive, lurid, vile, odious, loathsome, revolting, abhorrent and nauseating."

Taking a cue from Alger I hereby propose the formation of a subsidiary organization—the SFTIDAQOHVB—(The Society For The Immediate Drawing and Quartering of H. V. Brown).

Put Paul or Schomburg or Wesso or your new sensation, Murphy, on the cover, and watch the congratulations roll in. This Murphy is a lulu. Compared to Brown he is a delicate pineapple mousse beside a peck of raw garlic.—Hotel Perry, Petoskey, Michigan.

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Name
 Address
 City State

ANSWERS TO SCIENCE QUIZ
 (On Pages 42-43)

POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE

1. True.
2. True.
3. True.
4. True.
5. False.
6. True.
7. False.
8. False. Cepheid stars are characterized by variable brightness.
9. True.
10. True.
11. True.
12. False. Passenger automobiles employ the Hotchkiss drive.
13. True.
14. False. The number can be identified as pi.
15. False. The paths are called circuits.

TAKE A LETTER

- | | | |
|-------|--------|--------|
| 1. C. | 6. A. | 11. A. |
| 2. D. | 7. A. | 12. A. |
| 3. E. | 8. A. | 13. B. |
| 4. A. | 9. B. | 14. B. |
| 5. A. | 10. E. | 15. C. |

WHO'S WHO

- 5, 6, 7, 2, 1, 3, 8, 4.

THE ACID TEST

All the acids beginning with the letters A, B, or C are organic; the others are inorganic.

HAVE A HEAT WAVE

98.6°; 1.8° F.; mouth; higher; eliminated; metabolism; skin; rises; brain; 86° F.; 110° F.

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Mercury Expedition Number One
 By **GORDON A. GILES**

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Type or hand-print clearly in submitting announcements. **THRILLING WONDER STORIES** will not be responsible for losses sustained. Make plain just what you have and what you want to "swap" it for. Enclose a clipping of this announcement with your request. Address: Swap Column, **THRILLING WONDER STORIES**, 22 West 48th Street, New York, N. Y.

Want to exchange single tenor banjo, zither accordion, harp, 110 breast-skis, tanned and tailored. Max Belz, Waldoboro, Maine.

Will trade stamps of all countries' with anyone in the United States, Mexico or Newfoundland. Commemoratives and pictorials preferred. Brenton Swinmar, Marvin Street, Woodside, N. S.

Good 40-watt input amateur radio c.w. (code) transmitter for good telescope with first class optical system including at least 2-inch achromatic object lens. G. W. Bloemendal, 528 So. Harvey Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois.

Will swap 100 stamps for 20 Kool coupons. Ted Young, Rt. 3, Snohomish, Washington.

What have you? I will trade my stamp collection for some land or a house. Wesley L. Morgan, R.F.D. No. 7, Bangor, Maine.

Swap complete chemical laboratory including glassware and chemicals worth seventy-five dollars for good candid camera, 3.5 f or better. L. Silverbloom, 633 E. 16th Street, Brooklyn, New York, Apt. G-3.

Have 150 power microscope, No. 7 1/2 erector set in used condition and electric wood carver. Would like typewriter or any other item you may have. Raymond Corkey, 240 Franklin Street, Brooklyn, New York.

Have No. 7 Oliver typewriter and United States stamp collection. Want small typewriter or stamps. Write for details. Paul Bedell, 7015 Kedron Street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Send 100 different stamps and three cents postage. Receive same amount plus a Trinidad scenic view. E. L. Parr, 405-Ash Street, Trinidad, Colorado.

I will trade match covers and foreign stamps for Indian head cents. I also want precancels. Peter Retep c/o Raybin, 1133 Boston Road, Bronx, New York.

Send 100 to 1000 foreign and receive same amount, less 10 in return. George Ingham, 1980 Gildersleeve Avenue, Bronx, New York.

Will swap typewriter, for light 2 or 3 h.p. outboard motor or for 8 mm movie outfit—camera, projector and screen. Furnish complete description. Roy W. Schutzmann, 628 Nashville Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Have latest 10 volume set of Audels Electric Library in perfect condition. Want old United States stamps (commemoratives, preferred). Will trade foreign stamps for United States, too. Earl De Haven, 3416 West 63rd Street, Los Angeles, California.

Will swap money-making plans, secrets, formulas, etc. for anything useful. Send me your list at once. Ralph F. Ryden, Johnsonburg, Pennsylvania.

Trade stamps, postcards, postmarks, sheet music, match covers, etc., for coupons from Octagon, Borden and Kirkman's products. William Stepp, 510 Lycoming Street, Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

Have stamps, model railroad supplies, photographs of aeroplanes and souvenirs from the New York World's Fair. What have you? Ralph Winborn, 212 East 202nd Street, Bronx, New York.

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28x4.50-20	2.35	1.00	2.35	30x4.00-22	2.95	1.25	2.65
30x4.50-21	2.45	1.25	2.35	30x4.50-22	3.25	1.25	2.75
28x4.75-19	2.45	1.25	2.35	30x5.00-22	3.30	1.40	2.95
28x4.75-20	2.50	1.25	2.45				
30x4.00-20	2.65	1.25	2.45				
30x4.00-21	2.90	1.30	2.45				
28x4.25-19	2.95	1.30	2.45				
30x4.25-20	2.95	1.30	2.45				
31x4.25-21	3.25	1.30	2.45				
30x4.00-17	3.35	1.40	2.45				
28x4.50-18	3.35	1.40	2.45				
28x4.00-19	3.35	1.40	2.45				
30x4.00-17	3.40	1.40	2.45				
30x4.00-19	3.40	1.40	2.45				
32x4.00-20	3.65	1.50	2.45				
32x4.00-21	3.65	1.50	2.45				
32x4.50-20	3.75	1.75	2.45				
30x4.00-16	3.75	1.75	2.45				


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 31x6.25-21 \$4.25 1.50 \$4.25
 32x6.25-22 \$4.25 1.50 \$4.25
 34x6.25-24 \$4.25 1.50 \$4.25
 36x6.25-26 \$4.25 1.50 \$4.25
 38x6.25-28 \$4.25 1.50 \$4.25
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 30x4.00-21 \$3.75 1.25 \$3.75
 30x4.00-22 \$3.75 1.25 \$3.75
 30x4.00-23 \$3.75 1.25 \$3.75
 30x4.00-24 \$3.75 1.25 \$3.75
 30x4.00-25 \$3.75 1.25 \$3.75
 30x4.00-26 \$3.75 1.25 \$3.75
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 30x4.00-41 \$3.75 1.25 \$3.75
 30x4.00-42 \$3.75 1.25 \$3.75
 30x4.00-43 \$3.75 1.25 \$3.75
 30x4.00-44 \$3.75 1.25 \$3.75
 30x4.00-45 \$3.75 1.25 \$3.75
 30x4.00-46 \$3.75 1.25 \$3.75
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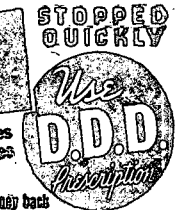
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