

EDITORIALS AND COMMENT

We've Sent for the Specialists; Now Why Not Wait and Give Them a Chance—By Darling.



Speak Up, Mars.

ANOTHER chapter has been added to the seemingly endless dispute as to whether the planet Mars sustains organic life in a state of intellectual development. A French savant arises with a degree of choler and certainty to declare that Garrett Serviss, et al., are wasting time speculating whether the world dedicated to the god of war is inhabited. It isn't, he says, and that's all there is to that.

Meanwhile Mars rises and sets regularly, revolves on its axis with no departure from the plane of its orbit, so far as mighty telescopes directed from the observatories of the earth-worm, man, can descry, and refuses even to change a single tone from the sanguine red suggestive of its name.

The plain truth is, Mars is running a good thing into the ground. Since the time of Galileo, or perhaps that of Roger Bacon, whose 800-year secrets are about to be disclosed by a Chicago professor, Mars has been vexing the astronomers. A delight to the spinners of fiction and Sunday supplement illustrators who people the planet with wonderful polychromatic beings as tall as a plumber's bill and with fingers like wet spaghetti, Mars is an endless irritant to the students of celestial mechanics. Into the clear night it pops from the West, challenging watchers with a pulsating scarlet glow, suspiciously like a wink across 40,000,000 miles of space (at perihelion) and seeming to ask: "Well, here I rise and shine. Am I inhabited or not?"

Various means of establishing communication with the hypothetical Martians have been suggested. One of the latest has to do with the projection of powerful light-rays, bearing mathematical truths, through the frigid ether. First a right angle, then another right angle, then a triangle, graphically

setting forth: "The sum of the angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles." Gladly, the Martian geometrical sharks will flash back, say, a dainty demonstration of the Pons Assinorum. So runs the idea. But suppose the Martians are too little advanced to catch the significance of our magnificent salute or so far in post-graduate work that they would scorn, to note proportions so puerile?

The man who offered to be shot at the moon in a superrocket might also volunteer for the Martian journey. But he might have a nasty time returning. The Martians may prohibit pyrotechnics. Or, —awful thought—they might confine the brash sky traveller in a cage and charge a Martian dime to view "Missing Link Between Monkey and Martian."

Altogether, it seems a propitious season for Mars to declare once for all. Its challenging exclusiveness will in the end operate to defeat its own purposes. Soon the Lick and Mount Wilson observatories may turn their heaven-probing tubes away from "The great red planet in the West" and declare a boycott until we are ready to invade our solar neighbor. And the first thing Mars knew might be an aerial—or ethereal—attack organized by Caproni's or Glen Curtiss' great-great-grandson, and the solemn planting of the banner of the United States of the World upon the arid shores of its ten-mile-wide canals.

The end of Heinie's obstinacy is near. The allies are taking over the breweries in occupied regions.

Germany is beginning to learn that counter proposals are almost as expensive as ultimatums.

The Bishop's Garden.

By THOMAS R. HENRY.

HILLS lonesome in cathedral sanctity
By starlit pathways pilgrim footsteps call
To shrines within some Old-World garden wall,

Steeped in the rapturous, haunting mystery
Of ghostly, mediaeval pageantry.

The soul of romance that survived the fall
Of half-forgotten empires hangs o'er all
The charm of melancholy artistry.

Folk of the village pass and cannot hear
The summons irresistible that comes
From white-robed hosts invisible; the clear
Throb of a phantom army's martial drums,
As troops of eld with shining arms parade
On roads of fire toward a new crusade.

To a secluded nook of ancient graves
The lost disciple in soul tumult came,
Tired of the fleeting phantasy of fame
Seeking again the promised love that saves
The bleeding and sore wounded soul which craves
Witness of an apostle's cross of flame
That from on high is offered still the same
Justice and power that quieted the waves
When Jesus walked one night on Gallilee.

Under moss-covered crucifixes lay
Cowed soldiers of a visionary day
And looking on in tender agony
A lichened replica of Calvary,
Guarding with mercy's smile the mounds of clay.

Passion of prayer in tearful kisses told
At eve when fragrant lilac petals fell;
A mother's trembling whispers loath to tell
Secrets her throbbing heart could barely hold
Of aspirations crushed as love grew cold;
Rough roads and red from Eden down to Hell,
Brisk wines of spirit vintage that impel
Earth's sluggards in the race for place and gold.

These pass and fade away; out of the night
The Master's voice floats, pleading tenderly,
"Come, all ye heavy-laden, unto me."
Into the soul's dark places floods the light
Of the Transfiguration; newly born
The pilgrim stands in the faint flush of morn

Home.

By EDWIN FORD PIPER.

Good-by to riding the wilderness
With my thoughts for company;
To the old new bed on the prairie grass,
A saddle to pillow me!

I will build me a house in the April sun
On my little garden ground.
My hand shall shape the rafter and beam,
My hammer stroke shall sound.

For a house is a house, and home is home—
The roots of the soul go deep;
And I own the boards and the rusting nails
As I own my tears and my sleep.

Good-by to riding the Wilderness!—
I build in the April sun.
Good-by to the land of the lonely sky—
My homeless days are done.

—Poetry Magazine.

Inscription to My Mother.

By THEODORE MAYNARD.

To you I owe
The blood of a Gael,
The laughter I wear
As a coat of mail.

To you I owe
My gift of scorn,
That I took from you
In the hour I was born.

To you I owe
The gift of belief,
Though the credo I utter
Has brought you grief.

To you I owe
My songs, each one,
For you hushed with music
Your little son.

—Harper's Monthly.