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**FLAMING FRONTIER** AMAZING STORY OF INTER-PLANETARY TRAVEL INSIDE



## England to Continent Post Rocket



An Up-to-the-minute News Feature on Matters Inter-Planetary

By P. E. CLEATOR

(President of the British Inter-Planetary Society.)

### Herr Zucker's Rocket

I RECENTLY returned from a visit to London, where, in the company of Professor A. M. Low, D.Sc., and several other members of the British Inter-Planetary Society, I interviewed Herr Gerhard Zucker, the German rocket experimenter who hopes to shoot his postal rocket here in England.

At the time of our visit no definite arrangements had been made, but we learned that the prospects of the experiment taking place in the near future appeared promising. Because these notes are published some little time after they are written, it is possible that by the time these words appear in print the rocket will have been shot. Should this be the case, SCOOPS readers will probably have learned all about the experiment; firstly, from the newspapers and, later, from the news-reel films.

But Herr Zucker has other ambitious plans for the future, in the event of his first attempt being successful. He is planning to construct a much larger rocket here in England, with a view to establishing a regular rocket postal service between England and the Continent. This accomplished, he envisions the formation of a company for the purpose of postal rocket manufacture.

Everything, however, depends on the result of his first experiment.

ray of electricity met the door, but nothing else happened.

For a few moments he kept the ray of electricity directed on the door, without result.

"Let us try our guns," suggested Wulson. "They may shatter the door."

The cave boomed and echoed as they shot at the door. The wall died into darkness. Raymer went forward to see if they had succeeded. There were the holes where the bullets had penetrated, but the bulk of the door was as firm as ever.

"Prisoners," said the leader of the expedition. "We shall have to wait now until the Martians come. But for goodness sake keep your eyes on that dark wall. There will be no warning if they come that way."

Wulson was thoughtful. "Remember that elevator thing we saw at the top of the hill? I wonder if it is directly over that machine. We could hear the hum of something coming from it. If it is, why not chance dropping a bomb down it? It will wreck this city of theirs, wreck it utterly. The lights will go out and the air will rapidly become foul. The Martians will flee."

"We are not out of here yet," remarked Raymer. "If we do manage to get out of here your suggestion will be worth following. That is, if—"

The rest of his sentence was lost and destined never to be heard. For while he was speaking the lights in all the walls died out. In the blackness now shone the mouth of the pit with a weird phosphorescent light.

"Ready, men?" whispered Raymer. "Then look out!"

There was a rush of advancing feet. The electric guns came into action, obliterating a stream of the Martians. Raymer's men produced their guns, and the cave thudded to the hollow boom of their shots.

Two of the Earthmen went down, screaming in agony that was short-lived as the rays of electricity burnt them.

side their caves. They will never expect to find us in there, but will search everywhere outside. Also we may be able to do some harm to their city."

"You think Mollheimer is still alive then?" asked Wulson.

Raymer laughed. "Yes. Trust him to avoid death."

They descended the hill, warily.

"Look," whispered Wulson.

There was an entrance directly ahead of them. Two Martians stood on guard, pistols held ready.

Raymer and Wulson took careful aim.

Crack! The two shots sounded as one, and the two Martians fell dead.

Wulson laughed grimly. "That is two less."

Cautiously they entered the mouth of the cavern. Raymer, of course, had seen the illuminated caverns before, but to his men they were new, and they uttered amazed cries.

"Hush!" whispered Raymer.

They crept forward, weapons held ready. Raymer had picked up the two electric pistols that had previously belonged to the Martians. One of these he handed to Wulson and the other he kept ready for his own use. He and Wulson led the way into the maze of passages. But the caverns seemed empty; no one came forward to dispute their progress.

"I wonder if I did get Mollheimer?" whispered Raymer.

They began descending. Not knowing the secret of the doors, they were forced to keep to the passages, and, as they went downhill all the time, they eventually came to the old machine room. Opposite to them was the passage that led to the new one. Raymer, closely followed by the others, went along this passage. Soon they could hear the drone of the machinery. Louder it came, and then they were at the tunnel end. They gasped at the sight of the vast monster that filled the great hall. It was bathed in the light from the myriad panels, the strong, yet soft, glow that seemed to shine on every part of the machine. Around it the Martians were working in their hundreds.

"Back, before they see us!"

The Earthmen turned and went back along the passage.

"That machine has some great purpose," whispered Wulson. "I wonder what it is?"

"It probably runs the entire city," Raymer replied.

"Yes; that is what I think it will do. Something will be needed to keep the air clean in these passages, and also to illuminate these panels.

They commenced ascending again, and came to a fairly large cave. Raymer looked puzzled. "I seem to remember being in here before," he remarked.

For in the centre of the cave was a great pit, and Raymer had fought once against the Martians in a cave that had a great pit in the centre of the floor.

The difference was the panelled walls, but then, Raymer reflected it was possible for the Martians to have fixed panels since he had been there before. Apparently the Martians had panelled all the passages and rooms. On the last occasion he had been here some of the passages and rooms had been dark.

"What's that?" asked Wulson, pointing. On the opposite side of the cave a door was closing. They rushed forward, but before they had reached it the door was closed.

"We're in a trap!" ejaculated Raymer. "Come on!"

They ran for the door by which they had entered, but before they had reached that it closed also.

The Earthmen threw their combined weight against it, but it remained immovable.

"They have us now," panted Wulson.

"Rubbish," said Raymer. "Stand back."

They stood away from the door and Raymer directed the ray pistol at it. He pressed the switch. There was a hiss as the

### "Cataclysm"

ONE of the latest productions of Andrew Lenard, of Budapest, who is a leading member of the Amateur Film Society, is a film entitled "Cataclysm," which concerns a journey to the Moon.

All the details of the journey through space, and the actual landing on the Moon, conform exactly with the requirements of such a journey as demanded by the scientific knowledge of to-day. Thus, unlike films of a similar kind, where the presence of an atmosphere on our satellite has been conveniently assumed, the adventurers in "Cataclysm" wear real space suits while on the Moon!

### Herr Ley to Visit England?

ON behalf of the British Inter-Planetary Society, I have invited Herr Willy Ley, one of the world's foremost authorities on rocketry, to England. At the moment he is uncertain whether he will be able to spare the time for the visit this year.

Although he speaks English fluently (and French and Russian, too!), he has never been to England, and when I met him in Berlin in the early part of this year he expressed a keen desire to visit this country. Hence my invitation.

I must also add that Herr Ley also speaks American! Several of the leading members of the American Inter-Planetary Society visited him in Berlin a few years ago. And even to this day he not infrequently ejaculates, "I guess so!"

And while writing of invitations and of America, I must mention that I, too, have received an invitation. It comes from Mr. G. Edward Poudray, a leading member of the American Inter-Planetary Society, who has very kindly invited me to stay with him at his home in Crestwood, New York. Unfortunately, I cannot possibly make the trip this year, but I am hoping to do so next.

Raymer, conscious of great pain in his left arm, continued firing at the Martians. They turned and fled, leaving numbers of their comrades dead and wounded on the floor.

Raymer sighed with relief. "I wonder how long these things last?" he murmured, looking at his electric pistol.

Wulson, nursing an injured arm, peered at him in the half-light.

"Me, yes. They just singed my arm a little. And you?"

"The same. We have lost two of our men, though."

Raymer frowned. "The Martians shall pay for that."

The light came stronger, as a wall leapt into illumination.

Suddenly Raymer was running, running as he had never run before. He had seen the door on the opposite side just closing to. He thrust his gun into the narrow opening. There was a click as the door came against it. There were vague noises from the other walls suggestive of closing doors, but no more walls lit up. Raymer guessed why. Their shots had punctured them in vulnerable places.

"Here, men!" he called.

The others rushed forward to him. "All get your hands down this edge and pull like blazes!" They did as he commanded, and very slowly the door gave to their combined efforts. At last it was back to the wall. With a click it automatically fell into position.

"Rush out, quick!" Raymer ordered.

The Earthmen hurried along the silent passages, luckily in the right direction, and came out at the same entrance as that by which they had entered.

They climbed up the hillside so that they could see what was happening on the plain. In the distance they could see a great fight taking place; the Martians were encountering the resistance of the men from New London who had come out to meet them.