

L 1936
Oct. 21
Dal. News

The State Press

THAT FIREBALL.

The editor of Texas Observer, Fort Worth, writes in that members of his staff have visited Oklahoma and brought back fragments of the "fireball" which is said to have come down in the Sooner State recently. The fireball, as the natives called it, was a meteorite, in the vernacular of the astronomical scientists. A meteorite comes from another world, whereas a fireball may be a home-made contrivance designed for unfriendly purposes. In ancient times, besiegers of cities used to make fireballs of tar and similar inflammables and hurl them into the besieged town by means of catapults. The effort had an incendiary purpose, and when many fireballs were hurled the firemen of the beleaguered town were kept so busy they didn't have time to help the soldiers. A fireball, then, may be a crude and cruel weapon, whereas a meteorite is a celestial visitor without a grain of enmity in it. It is a pity, though, that the meteorite or its remains can't talk, that it can't tell where it came from and how things were when it left from up there. Our astronomers would be greatly helped if they could interview a meteorite and get its history and reactions for publication. Shakespeare said there were sermons in stones. What would he have said had he heard what a meteorite, fresh landed, was telling! The fragments now owned by the Fort Worth observer aren't saying a thing. They are dumb. But they have traveled. Nobody can say they haven't traveled.

* * *

THAT FIREBALL. 1936 11-8

This column recently quoted an astronomical item, or perhaps an exegesis, from the Texas Observers' Bulletin, Fort Worth. Now we have an urgent solicitation from the editor of the Bulletin. The editor solicits us to subscribe. The price is only \$1 a year, cheap enough for any good astronomical guide. But a dollar is a dollar, and no amount of astronomy can pull a dollar out of starry infinitude. The Bulletin herein referred to is a mimeographed monthly. The mimeography is very good, considering that mimeography is never equal to printing-press print. This column cherishes and defends regular printing. Nothing since the printing press was invented, away back in 1450 A.D., has ever equaled it for clarity and flexibility. However, the Fort Worth astronomer is a good editor as well as an enterprising one. He sent a representative to Oklahoma to run down the fireball which enlightened that puissant State a month or two ago. Numerous reliable Oklahomans saw the fireball, but none knew where it fell to earth, where it registered its journey's end. The representative was truly loyal to his assignment, and his story of the search is interesting. Whether he found fragments of the fireball, or meteorite, we are not sure. His story is to be continued in the forthcoming issue. A gentleman named Jason, who was a Greek Prince in the long ago, organized an expedition to find and bring back to Greece the golden fleece from Colchis. Jason had many adventures, including plural marriage and trouble with his wives' kinfolks. But he brought home the bacon, otherwise the golden fleece. It was only a hank of ram's wool and failed to yield the profit expected of it. Jason himself got killed by timbers of his ship falling on him. Could it be possible that finding and fetching back to Fort Worth fragments of the Oklahoma fireball would be equally futile? We don't know. We are only a kindergarten astronomer.