On This Week's Cover

➤ THE ETA Carinae Nebula, shown on the cover of this week's SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, is a top contender for the most beautiful celestial object in the southern hemisphere. The cover photograph was taken with the ADH telescope. (See below).

This nebula is a large cloud of gas which shines in the fluorescence produced by the ultraviolet light of nearby, very hot stars. Overlying the Eta Carinae bright nebulosity is a considerable amount of dark matter, which produces the irregular dark spot seen in the photograph.

The region of the Eta Carinae Nebula marks in all probability the direction of the strongest nearby local concentration of highly luminous stars and gas in our galactic system, that is, it marks the direction towards the most likely candidate for a "spiral knot" in our galaxy.

Science News Letter, February 23, 1952

VETERINARY MEDICINE

Same Virus Gave Cancer To Chickens, Ducks, Pigeons

➤ PIGEONS AS well as chickens and ducks can get cancer from virus injections. The same virus causes the disease in all three species, though pigeons are not affected by the chicken virus until it has been adapted to ducks.

This finding, that a single virus can cause cancer in three different animal species, shows that the cancer virus behaves in this respect like many other viruses causing ordinary diseases.

The experiments leading to the finding are reported by Dr. Paulo R. F. Borges of the Jackson Memorial Laboratory, Bar Harbor, Me., and Dr. F. Duran-Reynals of Yale University Medical School, New Haven, in the scientific journal, CANCER RESEARCH (Feb.).

Science News Letter, February 23, 1952

INVENTION

Two-Faced Doll Invented—It's Toy

➤ WHEN YOU speak of a two-faced doll in the future, you had better be careful. You may be speaking of the doll your little daughter loves.

A two-faced, even a three-faced, doll has been invented. Hans Goerditz, New City, N. Y., received patent 2,584,798 for what he calls a "multiple-faced" doll. The face portion of the head revolves one-third of a circle to bring each of the three faces out from under the hair. The other two faces remain hidden.

Science News Letter, February 23, 1952

ASTRONOMY

Naked-Eye Comet Coming

Comet Pons-Brooks, last seen some 70 years ago, expected to be spotted shortly. At its closest approach to solar system, it will be visible to the naked eye.

➤ A BRIGHT comet is heading toward the solar system. You will probably be able to see it with your unaided eye when it swings close to the sun. But for months before and after its nearest approach to the sun, the comet can probably be spotted with binoculars or small telescopes as it speeds across the heavens.

Comet Pons-Brooks will probably become as bright as fifth magnitude, easily seen with the naked eye, calculates Dr. Paul Herget, director of the Cincinnati Observatory. Last seen some 70 years ago, this comet will make its closest approach to the sun on May 27, 1954, Dr. Herget has just reported to Harvard College Observatory, clearing house for astronomical information in the western hemisphere.

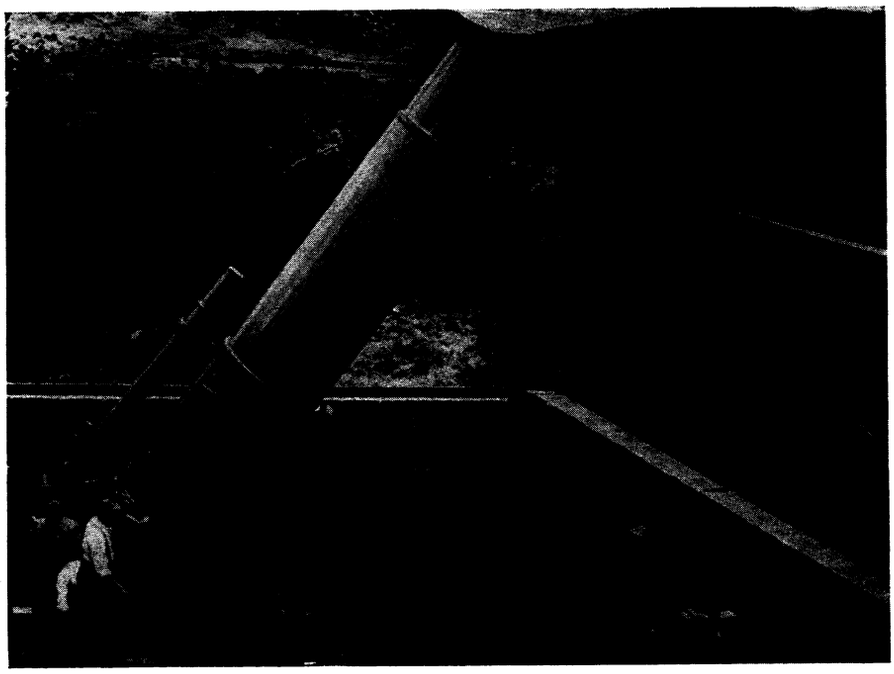
During its last approach to the sun, Comet Pons-Brooks could be seen with the naked eye for about three months. Reaching maximum during the winter of 1883-84, some observers estimated it as bright as fourth magnitude.

Look for the comet to be spotted in the northern constellations of Hercules or Lyra, the lyre, within the next few months by some powerful telescope. At present the comet is about 19th magnitude, but by June it will have brightened to 18th magnitude.

This bright comet was first found in 1812 by Jean Louis Pons, Frenchman who holds the all-time record for finding comets. He discovered 27 comets during his lifetime. When this comet returned in 1883, it was located by W. R. Brooks, another famous comet-finder. So today the comet bears a double name in honor of its discoverers.

There are no photographs of the comet as even on its latest visit to the sun astronomical photography was in its infancy.

Science News Letter, February 23, 1952



INTERNATIONAL EYE—This 36-inch Baker-Schmidt type telescope takes round plates and is designed to give perfect images over the entire field covered, about 20 square degrees. Located near Bloemfontein, South Africa, the telescope is owned jointly by the Armagh Observatory in Northern Ireland, the Dunsink Observatory in Eire and the Harvard College Observatory in Cambridge, Mass. Its 33-inch objective prism, giving spectra of the stars to about 13 magnitude, is the largest in existence (see cover, SNL, Aug. 18, 1951). The photograph on the cover was taken with this telescope.