

THE MENTOR

SCIENCE FICTION



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This issue is dedicated to

Patrick A.M. Terry



A 'Sense of Wonder' is

"To see a World in a grain of sand,
And a Heaven in a wild flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
And Eternity in an hour."

(-William Blake
1757-1827).

E D I T O R I A L.

'In considering a name for this magazine the selection of "MENTOR" was nonpareil. The actual adoption of this title was made on the assumption that in this magazine we, the editors, will try to convey our appraisal of "Science Fiction" and its authors. It is also assumed that contributions from interested readers will help complete the magazine.

The derivative of mentor comes from the name of the adviser of Telemachus, son of Ulysses. Mentor means, in fact, an experienced and trusted adviser. We, the editors, hope to advise YOU, the reader, on new and interesting advancements in the science fiction world.

The views expressed throughout these publications will not necessarily be those of this magazine but will be those of the individual contributors. The editorial notes will be the magazine's criterion.

Here, then, is the exordium and exposition of "THE MENTOR"

- R.M. '

For those interested in archaeology, the above may prove to be of interest. It is the editorial from the first issue of THE MENTOR (August 3, 1964). Glancing over it and the issue concerned, I can see that there have been major changes in policy, though not so much in content. (Continued on page 44.)

"THERE'S A HOLE IN YOUR WARP."

by John Brosnan.

I was sitting with my feet on the desk cleaning the barrel of my ultra-deluxe 889 blaster with a pencil when the door buzzer sounded. I put the weapon away, took my feet off the desk and pressed the door-release button.

"Come in!" I called.

The door opened and my hormones did handsprings. Judging from her figure, which must have measured close to 58"-25"-40", she was obviously a native of the planet Leemara where the weak gravity does strange things to the human body. I leapt up, grabbed a chair and slid it behind her.

"Sit down please," I said. "Can I help you off with your coat... blouse...?"

"No thank you, Mr Nova," she said firmly.

I shrugged and returned to my chair. "Okay, now what can I do for you, Miss...?"

"Dalo. Tennasa Dalo."

I frowned. "Dalo... that name strikes a bell."

"You've probably heard of my father, he's a well known scientist. Leemara's most famous, in fact. He's the reason I've come to see you."

"Oh?"

"Mr Nova," she leaned forward, her voice low and earnest, her cleavage unbelievable, "You have a reputation for being a particularly smart, fast thinking and tough man."

"I know, and I pay a certain publicity agent a small fortune for it."

"Mr Nova, I'll come straight to the point..."

"Call me Nick."

"Very well...Nick. Its this... my father is missing."

"Missing?"

"Yes."

"For how long?"

"Three Leemarian weeks now, which is about equal to one Earth month."

"I assume you've informed the authorities on your home world?"

"Yes. The police have conducted an extensive search but with no results, not even the smallest of clues."

"You have no ideas of your own as to his whereabouts?"

"None whatsoever. He gave no hint of anything being wrong, he seemed his normal self, deeply involved with his work as usual. Nor could his friends and scientific associates offer any suggestions. He simply vanished off the face of the planet."

"Hmmm," I said slowly.

Tennasa Dalo watched me with large, imploring eyes. Finally, she said in a voice that threatened to break, "I need your help, Mr Nova. Please say you will."

"Of course," I replied.

"Oh, thank you," she cried and gave a sigh of relief that must have placed tremendous strain on the fabric of her blouse. "I'm so grateful."

"Really?" I pressed a button and a richly upholstered divan slid out from the wall to the accompaniment of Stahg's "Blue Ecstasy on Venus."

I bounded gracefully over the top of my desk.

She ducked. I missed both her and the divan.

"I'm not that grateful... yet," she said.

Winching, I got to my feet. "I can wait," I said, sending the divan back into the wall. But the twitch in my left cheek gave me cause to doubt my words.

"I'm returning to Leemara on the next hyper-liner," she said. "It leaves within the hour. Will you join me?"

"I'd love to," I replied, "But I have a few things to take care of first. I have my own ship so I'll follow you later today."

"As you wish. I'll meet you at the Shaena City spaceport at 5 pm Leemara time." She stood up and blew me a kiss. "See you later." Then she was gone.

For a full five minutes after she left I sat there as in a trance while visions of her anatomy danced in my head.

Even though I designed it myself I must say I am rather proud of my shower appliance. It consists of an

exquisitely formed android nymph draped in a diaphanous gown. If one goes and stands in the shower stall she comes and pours scented water over you from a large golden pitcher. As she pours she hums an ancient Greek ballad.

Ostentatious it may be, but it certainly beats faucets.

With my shower completed, I slipped into my one-piece platinum fibre suit with the fluorescent fly then gave myself a quick shave with my magna blaster tuned down to a fine flame. A run-through the hair on my chest with a vibro-comb and I was on my way.

I caught the nearest super-sonic moving footpath to my favourite restaurant and arrived there within two minutes, it being only seventy five miles away. One must be extremely careful when boarding a footpath due to the high speed at which they move. Most people take advantage of the jet cars that wait beside the paths and pay the operators to fly them along the paths until they are travelling at approximately the same speed. Then it is possible to transfer from car to path with a fair degree of safety.

Of course accidents do happen. A jet car operator may misjudge the direction a footpath is travelling, for instance. I know of one such case, with the result that a former friend of mine is now a grubby stain stretching along some two thousand feet of the path that connects New London with Same Old Paris.

After I had eaten I went directly to the space port my private cruiser was housed. Old Joe, the caretaker on my level, met me with a cheery grin as I stepped out of the gravity tube.

"Howdy Mr Nova," he greeted in his leathery old voice, "Haven't seen you in quite a while."

"No Joe," I replied, "My business of late has not given me need to leave this planet. It will be good to get behind the controls again with the stars blazing across my viewplate and the thunder of rockets beneath me."

"True Mr Nova, very true. There's nothing on earth like it. The thrill of the awesome galactic panorama around you as you hurtle through the firmament. The majestic glory of endless, fiery star systems..." He choked with emotion. Space travel affects old Joe atongly, which is strange because he has never set foot off the earth.

"Your ship is all ready to go," he said when he had recovered. "I checked her over only last week."

We rode a bubble buggy along the rows of gleaming

space ships until we arrived at mine. I jumped out and gave the smooth hull an affectionate slap. "Hi ya baby. Did you miss your old man?" Call it romantic imagination if you like but I'll swear a happy tremor ran through her. The old girl knew her master!

"Mr Nova," said Old Joe, "Why are you patting that ship?"

"Why shouldn't I? I love every bolt in her body."

"Why do you feel that way about Harry Finfagle's ship?"

"This isn't mine?"

"No, I shifted yours, its on the other side of the row now. Hey, you mean you thought it was yours? Hey, that's a funny one. Hey, ha!"

I kneed Old Joe in the gut and walked over to my ship, which I named the "URGE" and clambered up the ladder into the pilot's blister. The familiar interior looked good to me. I sunk happily into the deeply padded g-couch and stared with satisfaction at the maze that was the instrument panel. It took a highly trained mind to comprehend it, a mind that could play with higher mathematics as a child can play with building blocks.

So I switched on the automatic pilot.

The warning buzzer sounded and a grapple descended from the ceiling and closed around the ship. With a groan the "URGE" was lifted from its cradle and slowly carried to the nearest launching ramp where it was carefully lowered.

"Please remain seated," said the flat voice of the automatic pilot who I called Fred. "I am about to take off."

"Okay, okay," I muttered, "I realise that. I'm not stupid."

Fred sniggered.

"Shut up," I snarled. Ever since all computers with a self-awareness level of 5 and over had been granted the rights of citizenship it was very difficult to find one that maintained the correct attitude between master and machine. Most had become downright insolent since the Act had been passed. Fred was no exception.

There was a slight shudder and the ship began to move. Slowly at first, as the anti-gravity field of the launching ramp raised it through the roof and into the sky until it was high enough for the rockets to be ignited with safety. Upon reaching that altitude there was a short pause, followed by a bone-crushing surge of speed. I sank deep into the g-couch as the terrific acceleration forced the air to wheeze from my lungs. A red veil began to form across my eyes and I knew I wouldn't be able to withstand much more

before blacking out.

"Okay," I hissed between clenched teeth.

"I beg your pardon?" asked Fred.

"I said okay..."

The gravity shielding clicked on. I sat up and gave a sigh of relief.

"May I ask why you always go through that puzzling ceremony?" asked Fred. "Is it because you have doubts concerning your masculinity? Or does it in some way serve..."

"Shut up," I snarled.

"There's no need to take that attitude," said Fred in a cool voice. Why they built these things with a wide range of speaking tones I'll never know. "I was just curious. You're such an unusual specimen of humanity I find the study of your motives and drives rather fascinating. You're definitely neurotic, you know. You have a pronounced inferiority complex mixed with delusions of grandeur. I often wonder how you got this way..." My couch suddenly tilted back several degrees. "...perhaps if you told me about your childhood?"

"Fred..." I growled ominously. I call him Fred because it annoys him. His real name is Anthony Charles Hawthorn. "...if you don't shut up I'm going to disconnect you, then pull out a handfull of your transistors and ram them up your memory bank."

"May I point out," said Fred Huffily, "that the tampering with my internal workings is strictly against the law. Also you are not permitted to disconnect me. Interplanetary law states that a competent pilot must be in control of any space vehicle at all times."

"Are you saying I'm not competent?"

"In a manner of speaking... yes."

"And on what do you base that piece of information.?"

"I have on record the one time you assumed complete control of this ship. It occurred when I experienced my one and only malfunction. We were just leaving the Earth's atmosphere and due to my temporary break-down, I was forced to relinquish the controls to you. Within minutes we had crash landed. Before I had the chance to inform you that we were in Antarctica you ran out of the ship yelling something about discovering a new planet. Then you approached a group of penguins and began to extoll the benefits of becoming a member of the Galactic Federation!" Fred sniggered at the memory.

"May your mother's memory tapes turn green," I snarled.

"There you go again, reverting to childish, ineffectual outbursts. I really do believe that a psychological over-hall

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would do you the world of good."

"Fred, would you please shut up and keep your mind on the driving."

"Speaking of driving, where are we going? We're almost past Pluto and I need the co-ordinates for the hyper-jump."

I told Fred our destination and prepared myself for the jump. There is nothing quite like the drop into sub-space. Its as if every cell in one's body is turned inside out. For an instant one feels as large as infinity itself and as small as an electron at the same time. Ecstasy and agony are excruciatingly grafted into a single, sublime sensation as one's body is wrenched from ordinary space and deposited on a plane of existence as different from our own as white is to black. At least, that's what I'm told it's like. I wouldn't know myself as I always make the jumps under deep anaesthetic. One can't be too careful.

"Jumping now..." announced Fred.

I pressed a black cube against my upper arm and at once drowsiness overwhelmed me. Even as I lay back in the g - couch the blackness was closing in.

.

We had emerged from sub-space by the time I awoke and the planet of Leemara filled the view screen. It took only minutes for Fred to receive landing clearance from the space port authorities then we were on our way down. The landing at Shaena was a smooth one, as per usual. That's one thing I will give to Fred, his landings are always smooth.

After I had been checked over by the robot port investigator to see if I was carrying prohibited goods or unknown viruses I climbed out of the "Urge" and walked round to her rear.

"Ho, my fine beauty!" I cried, "Once more you have served me well." I spat on my hand and placed it on one of her rocket tubes to cool it down.

Dammit, I'm not afraid to show sentiment!

"Hello there, Nick!"

I turned round and saw Tennasa approaching. Her walk on Earth had been mindbending enough, but here on Leemara, free of the restrictions of the heavier gravity, it was positively unbelievable. The various parts of her body appeared to be trying to break away and live lives of their own.

The whole side of my face started to tingle.

"Hello Tennasa. Been waiting long?"

"No," she replied, "I'd just finished checking with

the authorities about my father."

"Any luck?"

"None. There hasn't been a sign of him. They've practically given up. I had a quick look-in at home too, but the servants haven't seen him either." Suddenly she broke down and, with a loud sob, flung herself upon me.

"Oh Nick, Nick," she wailed, "Will I ever see my father again?"

"Pull yourself together, girl," I commanded, "And stop crying. Salt water plays havoc with the lustre on my suit."

"I'm sorry," she said with a sniff, "You must think I'm an awful idiot. Its just that I've been so worried about him." She dabbed at her eyes with a small handkerchief. "I'm alright now, you can let go. Nick, I said you can let go now... why are you twitching like that.? Nick, please let me go..."

I let go of her and began to apply medication to the hole that had suddenly appeared in my shin.

"Come on," she called, "I'll take you home and show you over my father's lab. That was where I last saw him. Perhaps you'll find some kind of clue." She turned and sprinted in the direction of a car park. I followed in a more leisurely fashion, limping slightly.

Tennasa's house was located on the other side of the crystal garden that was Shaena City but in her speedy, latest-model grav car we were there within minutes.

We dropped towards the roof and a mouth-like aperture opened to receive us. The car sunk through it and landed gently in a garden. Tennasa leapt out and gestured for me to follow. As I was climbing out a door slid open on the opposite side of the garden and a Glyph trundled in. Glyphs are natives of the planet Tig and could be described as walking mushrooms. They are widely used over the human populated portions of the galaxy as servants for despite their ghastly appearance they have an aptitude for such work. Also they happen to be pacifists by nature.

I walked over to it and spat squarely into its single eye.

"Why on Leemara did you do that?" asked Tennasa.

"I can't stand the slimy bastards."

"I didn't think there were still people left that practised racial prejudice."

"I can't help it. One of them married my sister."

Tennasa raised her eyebrows. "I wouldn't have thought such a thing was biologically possible."

"You should see my sister."

Tennasa half opened her mouth to reply then thought better of it. "Follow me," she said, "I'll show you the laboratory."

She led me down a corridor and into a large, brightly illuminated room. It was filled with the sort of stuff one usually finds in a laboratory. I glanced around with the air of one who knows what he's looking at.

"Very interesting," I said.

Tennasa pointed to an apparatus that stood on a nearby bench. "That's what he was working on just before he disappeared. He told me he was trying to construct a device that would create a space warp."

It consisted of a square box about four feet wide and two feet high. Attached to the top of it was a metal hoop standing upright. Cables ran from one side into a tall cabinet covered with dials and switches that stood by the wall.

"That's the control board," explained Tennasa. "It contains a computer that's supposed to determine the size and position of the opposite end of the warp. In theory, anyway. As far as I know my father hadn't managed to get it working properly. I've tried it myself and all I got was a few odd noises. Do you know much about electronics, Nick?"

"Not much, I must confess. Not my line. In fact it's a branch of endeavour that hasn't attracted many of my family. Nearest thing to a scientist we had was my Uncle Campbell. He invented a nuclear powered lavatory."

"A what?"

"A nuclear powered lavatory. He nicknamed it the 'Atomic John'!"

"It's the first I've heard of it," said Tennasa dubiously.

"I'm not surprised. It wasn't exactly what you'd call a success. The actual concept was quite clever. It consisted of having an atomic furnace beneath the toilet seat; after use the waste products were flushed into it and blasted into nothingness, but he had trouble in the practical application. He only ever built one working model and it had one big drawback - you had to use a lead suit when using it."

"Rather inconvenient."

"Yes. It was a problem that plagued my uncle for years."

"Did he ever find the solution?"

"Unfortunately no. He became so frustrated with the damn thing he took to heavy drinking. One day he tested the 'Atomic John' while under the influence..."

"And..."

"A tragedy. He didn't zip his lead suit up fast enough."

Died later from an overdose of radiation."

"That's terrible," cried Tennasa.

I nodded. "It is. Ever since then I haven't been able to use a toilet without thinking of Uncle Campbell."

Tennasa was silent for awhile, then she said softly, "Nick, do you really think there's any hope of finding my father? Can I dare hope?"

I smiled and attempted to put my arm around her shoulders to give her a reassuring hug but she moved too fast.

"Put your fears at rest, dear. I have solved the case."

She gave a squeal of delight. "Really? Oh, that's wonderful, but how?"

"It's simple. Who would have profited most from your father's disappearance?"

She wrinkled her forehead. "I don't know. Who?"

"T.I.S.C." I replied with triumph.

"What?"

"T.I.S.C.," I explained patiently, "Stands for The Interplanetary Spacelines Corporation."

"So?"

"They have the monopoly on the shipping of interplanetary freight in this part of the galaxy, right?"

"I suppose so," she said.

"It is, believe me. Now how do you think the big boys in T.I.S.C. would feel when they discover that someone is working on a means of transporting matter anywhere in the universe instantaneously? Their freighters would become obsolete."

"I see," said Tennasa. "You think he's been kidnapped by these people to prevent the completion of his space warp device?"

"It's extremely likely."

"But how could they have known what he was working on?"

"Perhaps a colleague of your father's let something slip to someone. A story like that would soon get around."

Tennasa gasped. "Perhaps they've killed him!"

"I doubt it. They're probably holding him until they can force him to sign away the rights of his invention..."

"You mean they're torturing him!"

I sighed. "It's possible, but don't worry, now that I know who's behind it I'll soon have him back with you."

"Oh Nick, you mean it?" she cried.

I nodded heroically.

"Oh, that's wonderful! Nick, I'm so grateful to you."

"You are?" I immediately took out a small cube, tore off the plastic covering and threw it on the floor. Contact with the air caused it to expand and within seconds it had grown into a divan, complete with tray of chilled drinks. Soft, romantic music filled the lab.

I lunged, but Pennasa, displaying her usual degree of agility, bounded away to safety.

"I'll be even more grateful when you find my father," she said.

"Then I leave at once. May I borrow your car?"

"Of course. And Nick - please be careful."

My nose started to tingle and my ear lobes went dead. "Don't worry, I will. But before I go there's one little favour I want to ask of you."

"Yes," she said suspiciously.

"This bloody divan. Its a hell of a job getting it back into the plastic wrapper. So if you wouldn't mind pushing from that end..."

.

The door of the gravity tube swished shut behind me and I stepped into the outer office of the district manager of T.I.S.C. I had made it with less difficulty than expected. Gassing the roof guards had helped no end.

Apart from a girl seated behind a reception desk at the far end of the room there was no one else about. I marched over to her and glared down with what I hoped to be an expression of grim determination.

"I want to see your boss right away, its very urgent."

"Have you an appointment?"

"No. But just tell him it concerns Professor Dalo. I'm sure he'll see me then."

"I'm sorry, sir, but I have strict instructions not to admit anyone without an appointment."

I lost my patience. "Listen sister," I growled, "I haven't got the time to play around." And I reached down to press the door-release button situated on the desk in front of her.

"Help, help," she said, without raising her voice, "I am being attacked."

What followed next was confusing. In a blur of blinding speed the girl grabbed my arm and before I knew it I was lying on my back on the floor. She was standing on my chest, her

diamond tipped heels leaving marks on my chest that are there to this very day.

"Mine is a strange story," she began. "When I was a young, innocent girl in my early teens I was continually being alarmed upon hearing reports of young women having their honour assaulted by strange men in dark, back streets. I'm afraid this fear became an obsession with me and I became determined that a similar fate would not befall me. So I took lessons in self-defense. I began with Judo, then followed it up with karate, the fundamentals of boxing, Savate, Jiu-Jitsu, Yawara, Akido, Ate-Waza, Sumo wrestling and Juctatoo. The latter, in case you don't know, is a martian form of combat in which the big toe is utilised as an instrument of death.

"After that I was ready for anything. With confidence I could walk the streets at night with the knowledge that my honour was secure. Just let a strange man approach me - I was a veritable walking engine of destruction, itching for the opportunity to make use of my years of training.

"Months went by but nothing happened. So I began to frequent the back streets and dark alleys. Still nothing. I began to get a little desperate. In an attempt to bring matters to a head I began to leave the top button of my blouse undone and adopted a 'loose' look in my eyes.

Years went by and still nothing happened. These days I roam completely naked through the streets and hurl myself upon any man I come across - all to no avail. My life had become a hell of utter frustration. But now - now at last - someone has attacked me. You!"

With that she picked me up and threw me against the wall. I bounced off and landed on the floor. At that moment a door opened nearby.

"Miss Virgo, must you make so much noise? And who is that?"

"I'm sorry, Mr Simmis, but this man was trying to break into your office. He attacked me."

Simmis prodded me with his foot. "Hey, you! What's your game?"

I raised my head with great difficulty. "It's all over," I croaked, "You might as well come clean, I know the whole story."

"What the hell are you raving on about?" he demanded.

I gave a knowing laugh. "Stop acting innocent, Simmis. I know all about Professor Dago. Give up. Don't make it any harder on yourself."

Simmis snorted. "The man's a nut case! Call the security guards, Miss Virgo."

I staggered to my feet. "Still trying, eh. Well, that's

too bad - for you."

I lunged at him but before I could get hold of him Miss Virgo grabbed me by the shoulder and spun me round. Caught off balance, I had only time to admire the shape of her thighs before the toe of her shoe landed on my forehead. Someone pulled the plug out of reality and it gurgled away, leaving me in the middle of nowhere.

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"Hello Tennasa, its me, Nick."

"Nick! You've found my father!"

"Well ... not exactly."

"What happened?"

"Good question. To be truthful, I've run into a little trouble. Things didn't exactly go as planned."

"You mean T.I.S.C. aren't behind it?"

"Oh, I'm sure they are. Its just that I'm going to have to change my mode of operations."

"Please tell me what happened."

"Its a long story. Tell you what - how about meeting me here in town. We could have dinner somewhere and I could give a complete run-down."

"Alright. Wherabouts?"

"How about the Aqua-restaurant at the Shimera Hotel? I've heard a lot about it."

"Fine. I'll see you there in half an hour."

".....so they made me sign a paper saying that I promised to have a psychological check-up at my earliest convenience, then they threw me out."

"And you just gave up? Why didn't you try to sneak back in?"

"I did. This time they threw me as far as the ornamental bushes at the bottom of the front steps."

"Oh, is that why you're wearing that branch in your hair?"

"Tennasa, why didn't you tell me it was there?" I pulled it out.

"It looked cute. I thought it was some kind of new Earth fashion or something."

We were sitting at a combination chair and table unit in the Aqua-restaurant. The restaurant has the reputation of

being somewhat unique. Mainly because it hovers beside the Shimera Hotel one thousand feet above the ground.

The restaurant consists of a spherical body of water fifty feet in diameter which is held together by a gravity-control globe at its centre. There are four more globes positioned in a rough square around the water creating an area of extremely low gravity. It is in this space that the chair and table units float. Waiters flit to and fro between them with the aid of hand jets.

"So what are you going to do next?" asked Tennasa.

"Break into Simmis' home. Perhaps I'll find a clue there as to where they're holding your father."

"Oh Nick. You're so brave." She reached across the table and put her hand on mine. Her touch seared my flesh. I began to twitch.

"Nick, why do you twitch so much?"

I hastily reached for my goblet of wine. "Well..." I began. I didn't get to finish because at that moment my goblet turned to dust and trickled out between my fingers.

"That's strange," I observed. "Did you see that, Tennasa?"

She nodded dumbly.

With a loud ping, the vase sitting in the centre of the table vanished.

"Nick," gasped Tennasa, "I think someone is shooting at us with a blaster."

I was about to say 'impossible' when a six inch hole appeared in the table. "You could possibly be right." In an instant my ultra-deluxe 889 blaster with a pencil in the barrel was in my hand. I took the pencil out of the barrel.

"Can you see anything?"

"Yes!" she said. "Two men directly above us - they're sitting at the table next to that gravity control globe. One of them is holding a gun!"

I looked up and saw that she was correct. I wasted no time. In one swift, fluid action I had aimed and fired.

I missed the men and hit the gravity control globe.

After that things became confused.

Since entering the Aqua-restaurant 'down' had been in the direction of the centre of the pool, thanks to the artificial gravity field. My destroying one of the globes I had sort of disrupted the delicate balance. This soon became evident as the universe began to seemingly tilt on its side. What had formerly been 'up' slowly became 'down'. The whole process was thoroughly

nauseating.

"Nick!" screamed Tennasa, "What shall we do?"

"Keep calm. I'll think of something," I replied.

By this time panic and confusion had spread through the restaurant. The waiters struggled to restore some kind of order but their hand-jets didn't have enough power to cope with the increased gravity. To make matters worse, the pool was beginning to break up into small globs of water. Before long the air was filled with water, food, cutlery and discarded items of clothing, not to mention screaming patrons.

Then the whole mess began to slowly sink towards the ground.

Now beside the Shimera Hotel is a garden, and in this garden is another restaurant. It is called, logically enough, the Garden Restaurant. It was toward this that the Aqua-restaurant began to head.

As the ground became closer I could see that the lower restaurant was also packed with people. In fact there seemed to be some kind of special banquet in progress down there. So far none of them had noticed the descending doom.

Down, down, down we all drifted - like pieces of fluff wafted by a spring breeze. We were about fifty feet up when someone on the ground happened to see us. The news rapidly spread. The sounds of revelry died away and all faces became upturned. Complete and utter silence followed. No one moved. Everyone was frozen in their seats.

Then the Aqua-restaurant, formerly separated by one thousand feet of space, made historic contact with the Garden Restaurant - and the spell was broken.

Chaos ensued.

I landed feet first in a cauldron of simmering soup. I stepped out, wiped my feet on the tablecloth, excused myself to the wide-eyed dinner party I had intruded upon, and jumped off the table. I had difficulty in locating Tennasa but finally found her in the lap of an elderly gentleman who was obviously making the most of the situation.

"It falleth like the gentle rain from heaven," I quoted, and smashed him one in the face. Then I grabbed Tennasa by the hand and we dashed frantically through the surrounding confusion towards the car park.

When her grav-car eventually lifted safely into the sky we both gave a deep sigh of relief.

"Let's not go back there again," I said, "They might not have a sense of humour."

"I wonder who those two men were?" murmured Tennasa.

"Probably hired by T.I.S.C. Did you see what happened to them?"

"No. I lost sight of them on the way down. We might as well head back to my place now. I want to get cleaned up."

A couple of hours later found Tennasa and me talking in her father's lab. We still hadn't decided on what I was going to do next.

"I'm going to have to be a bit more careful from now on. With armed ghouls around there's no use in taking chances. But at least its a sign I'm on the right track. I must have thrown a scare into Simmis today."

"Are you still going to break into his home?" she asked.

"Well..."

Just then the door opened and in trundled the domestic Glyph.

"Socrates, I didn't ring for you," said Tennasa with a frown.

A crack suddenly appeared in the Glyph's head, or what supposedly serves as a Glyph's head. It spread all the way down to his clump of feet. The next instant the Glyph had split completely in two - and standing between the two halves was a tall, thin man. This in itself was disturbing, but to make matters worse he was holding a large blaster which was pointed straight at me.

"Great balls of fire!" I exclaimed.

"Daddy!" cried Tennasa. She ran forward and gave the man an enthusiastic hug.

"Sizzling comet tails!" I exclaimed.

"Daddy, where have you been?" cried Tennasa.

"Its a long story," he said and lowered the barrel of his blaster until it was aimed at my stomach.

"Move and your dinner will be all over the wall."

I froze.

"Tennasa, why the hell did you bring this idiot here?" he asked.

"To find you. I thought you'd been kidnapped or something. Daddy, where have you been? What happened? Nick said T.I.S.C. had captured you because of your space warp device."

"Nick is an idiot. You almost ruined everything by bringing him here. Why couldn't you leave well enough alone?"

"I was so worried about you Daddy. I didn't know what to think."

He sighed. "I suppose I should have told you what was going on - but you take after your dear, late mother so much. The old bag could never keep her mouth shut.

"I'll explain briefly, my dear. While experimenting with my warp machine I made an amazing discovery. The objects I sent through the warp expanded! Why, I still don't know, but it's a fact. Anything I send through the warp this end comes out larger at the other end - and the further I send them the bigger they become!" He paused for dramatic effect. I blinked furiously to show him how impressed I was.

"Naturally," he continued, "I soon became aware of the benefits that could be reaped from this phenomenon. By sending precious metals through the warp I could swiftly increase my stocks. Before long I would be rich!"

"But of course I had to be careful. Absolute secrecy was a must. Many of my scientific associates knew along what lines I was currently experimenting. They would be suspicious if I suddenly halted my research for no apparent reason. So I decided to disappear. How I managed to is now obvious - I've been wearing that Glyph skin for the last three weeks.

"At the same time I formed an alliance with a local underworld character by the name of "Dregs" Nickel. He is handling all the mundane details, such as selling the products of our operation. By the way, he promised me his boys would take care of this nut. How come he's still alive?"

Tennasa told him. Professor Dalo shook his head in disbelief. "Anyway, speaking of "Dregs", it's time I sent another consignment through to him. He'll be waiting." He took something out of his pocket, walked over to the warp machine and inserted it into its side. "Without this component," he explained, "The whole thing is nothing but a pile of junk." Then he turned back to face me. His expression was harsh.

"Tennasa, does this idiot mean anything to you? I'm going to have to blast him. He knows too much."

"You're rich, you say?" asked Tennasa slowly.

"Loaded. A few more transmissions and I'll have enough to leave this planet and spend the rest of my life on one of the luxury worlds."

"Can I come too?" she asked.

"Of course."

"Blast him then."

Professor Dalo raised the barrel of the blaster. "I've changed my mind. Your head will make much less mess than your stomach."

At this point I decided it was time for action.

I turned and leapt for the door but my foot slipped

and I went skidding into the control bank. Desperately I clawed at it as I fell. My hand closed round a lever. There was a click as something gave way.

The next moment the laboratory was filled with a deafening roar and I felt myself lifted up. Still clinging onto the lever I twisted my head around and saw a fantastic sight. The area within the hoop of the warp machine had turned black and I could see stars twinkling in the distance. Into this hole the air was rushing at an incredible speed. Both Professor Dalo and Tennasa were trying to maintain tenuous holds on the sides of benches.

Then Dalo, who was nearer to the machine than his daughter, lost his grip. With a screech he hurtled feet first into the hole. A brief sucking sound, then he was gone.

Spurred on by what I had just witnessed I made a super-human effort and managed to push the lever back up. The hole vanished as suddenly as it had appeared and Tennasa and I made a painful return to the floor.

"Jumping Jupiter!" I gasped.

That all took place weeks ago. Now I'm back sitting with my feet on the desk cleaning the barrel of my ultra-deluxe 889 blaster with a pencil. Things are back to normal.

Its all over between Tennasa and myself, of course. Not because of any hard feelings on my part though. I can understand how a girl might suffer a momentary moral lapse when faced with the temptation of limitless wealth.

But Tennasa says she can't overlook the fact that I'm responsible for her father's unpleasant fate. She says that everytime she looks at me she can see him in orbit around Alpha Centauri.

All twenty three thousand miles of him.

THE END.

- John Brosnan.

-----ooOoo-----

There aren't all that many sf, or for that matter other, fanzines in Australia. The ones there are cover most topics, from sf to comics. There is only one newszine, though. It is THE NEW FORERUNNER, edited by Gary Mason. The NF is the only regular zine covering news of all parts of the fan field, and is well worth the fifteen cents to have it posted to you. See the fanzine page for Gary's address.

* * *

THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES.

by

Patrick A.M. Terry.

Tis 'a constant source of wonder to me that so very few of the ladies who are authoresses of S.F. receive so little of the plaudits and praise for their work that is given to male writers. What little recognition is given to the very few seems to be very reluctantly given, almost as if such recognition is begrudged. Yet, S.F. stories by there ladies, I venture to say, would, if published under a masculine cognomen, be lauded to the skies. The only conclusion I can draw is that, just because they are the "females of the species", they are somehow deemed to be, by most reviewers/critics, an inferior breed.

Sure, and tis also surprising to realise just how many ladies are writing very good S.F. of all kinds at the present time. Tis freely I admit that my memory is far from good, but I can think of as many, if not more, names of lady writers, than I can think of men, and let me interpose here to state that, for the purposes of this article, the term "writer" is synonymous with the term "authoress", and is used, chiefly because it takes much less time and exertion to write the word "writer". To name those whose names are fresh in my memory, naturally I begin with those I am privileged, honoured and proud to call personal friends; such as Andre Norton, Anne McCaffrey and Leigh Brackett. Others come to mind are Sonya Dorman, Judy Merril, Kate Wilhelm, Juanita Coulson, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Jane Roberts, Zenna Henderson, Lee Hoffman, Ursula Le Guin, C.L. Moore, Joanna Russ, Margaret St. Clair, Shirley Jackson, Kathleen Lines, Rose Wyler, Patricia Lynce, Jane Gaskell, Lisa Tuttle, Joanna Berger, Sidney Van Scyoc and Jane Gilbert. Not at all an unimpressive total so far and, if the names of those prominent in Editorial and publishing fields were to be added, this list could be very much longer. Even so, tis not at all likely that I have listed all the "females of the species" who are active at this time, and I would be very pleased to learn of others that any reader may know, especially if names of lady writers could be accompanied by some titles (and publishers) of their works. When thought is given to the number of books that have been, or are being published, for or by these ladies, the figures reach almost astronomical dimensions.

In the remainder of this article I intend to write mostly about only two of the aforementioned ladies and, to forestall inevitable criticism, I freely admit extreme partisanship and simply add, these are my friends, who, in my eyes at least, are among the very top few writers. Tis referring I am, of course, to Andre Norton and Anne McCaffrey (if it ever gets past our

editor!). Start then, I will, with some facts about Anne McCaffrey, who has recently made S.F. history with a number of "firsts" for lady writers.

Anne's first published story was The Lady in The Tower, (F&S.F? 1959). This story was also anthologised in French. A sequel to The Lady in The Tower appeared in F&S.F. Jan. 1969, entitled A Meeting of Minds. Tis informed I am by Anne, that another story in this series is coming but, in chronological sequence, it is a precursor to The Lady in The Tower. The three stories, with the necessary "bridging" sequences, are to be published as a complete novel later by Betty Ballantine.

Anne's "Helva", or "Ship", stories were published as follows :-

<u>The Ship Who Sang.</u>	F&S.F., April 1961.
<u>The Ship Who Mourned</u>	Galaxy, March 1966.
<u>The Ship Who Killed</u>	Galaxy, October 1966.

There are, I believe, still more "Helva", or "Ship", stories to come in the not too distant future. Then her novel Restoree, published by Ballantine in September 1967, caused a considerable stir in S.F. circles for quite a long period in the U.S.A. and, to a lesser degree, here in Australia. The editor of one so-called "fanzine", (very aptly entitled Psychotic) claimed to have "reviewed" Restoree after, as he admitted, reading only 63 pages. His so-called "review" very forcibly demonstrates the prejudicial and belittling viewpoint referred to in the opening paragraphs of this article.

Some of the ensuing controversy, in which the writer of this played no small part, can be found in later editions of the fanzine Psychotic, together with a retraction of the strictures contained in the original so-called review. Tis to be hoped that his "reviewing" will, in future, be somewhat less biased, for, among his sweeping and unjust condemnations were (and I quote his exact words) :- "Anne McCaffrey not only is a writer who happens to be female, she is a writer who writes like a woman." (His underlining, I add.) My own comments in this were, if I remember correctly, "Happens to be female?" and "What do you expect a woman to write like? A flamin' chimpanzee?"

Again he wrote :- "The major drawback of the book, is that is has a female protagonist, and is written, first person, by a woman." Having for years been annoyed by this type of criticism, based, as far as I can judge, on an antipathy to women writers just because they are women, I fear twas a trifle severe I was in a letter to this editor/reviewer/critic, who, to do him justice, accepted my rather irate and indignant challenge to print my letter in full, and did so. Twas then, and later, that some of the more odious (and stupid) strictures were withdrawn and an apology of sorts, to Anne, was made.

However, to proceed with Anne's printing history; next

came Weyr Search in Analog, November 1967. For this story she was, and very deservedly, awarded a "Hugo", becoming thus the first "female of the species" ever to win such an award.

Following Weyr Search came Dragonrider, in two parts, in Analog, December 1967 and January 1968. This sequel to Weyr Search brought her a much prized "Nebula Award" (see photo) and she thus shares yet another "first" for Kate Wilhelm with her short story The Planners, and Anne with Dragonrider, became the first "females of the species" to win Nebulas. Notwithstanding the immense popularity, kudos and publicity given to the Hugo Awards, I venture to state that, in my opinion, any writer of S.F. would value a Nebula Award to a greater extent than a Hugo for, while the Hugo's are awarded by the votes of the reading public - mainly the "fans", Nebulas are awarded by the votes of contemporary writers who, I think, would be a much more critical body of people. Surely no more severe and critical judges could be found than fellow writers of S.F.

Weyr Search and Dragon Rider, Hugo and Nebula winners respectively, are combined in Anne's novel Dragonflight, published by Ballantine in July, 1968, and this novel has become a "best seller" in the U.S.A. Anne's latest story to appear in print is titled A Womanly Feeling, and is contained in Analog, February 1969. Owing to the exigencies of Postal and Shipping services in the U.S.A., a copy of the February Analog has not yet, at the time of this writing, reached me. (Like us here in Australia, they also have similar Postal and Shipping troubles in the U.S.A.) Anne is now engaged in writing, (as she says) a final novel in the "Dragon" series; editing an anthology of contemporary stories; and tis hoped to persuade her to edit yet another anthology, of stories by "females of the species", exclusively.

Beside her writing, she (and her husband) writes, sings and plays Opera, and she is also the Secretary-Treasurer of the Science Fiction Writers of America. This is yet another "first" for her. In fact, tis a "double first", as I understand tis the first time a female has held office in the S.F.W.A., and also the first time that the two offices of Secretary and Treasurer have been held by the one person.

Having, to add to her multifarious duties, also a husband, three husky offspring and a home to care for, plus a large and varied circle of correspondents, tis often I wonder how she ever finds the time to do all the things she does, and most adequately done they are, too. Seems to me at times she has, somehow, solved the secret of sort of "stretching" time, to give her more than 24 hours in a day and a few extra weeks in a year.

The versatility of her writing and the continuing high standard of same is rapidly bringing her into the forefront of female writers. Indeed, tis confidently predicted by her great friend and admirer, Andre Norton, that Anne is "The Coming Leader and Queen of Female Writers of S.F." (With this opinion I fully agree.) There are, of course, some people who would not

agree, such as one of our own Australian so called "eminent" reviewer/critics, who could find no other expression than "Andre Norton - Phooey!!" A typical comment from the type of person who is antipathetic to the "Female of the Species". However, tis for sure that none of our female writers of S.F. would be unduly worried by such views, for they can, with pride, look at their sales records which, after all, are the ultimate proofs of ability. Look, for a while, at Andre Nortons most impressive record of novels, to say nothing of short stories, novelettes and novellas. Who, in the light of such a record, could deem her to be other than a very competent judge of her contemporary writers? Oh yes, I know that Andre has been, and still is, "tagged" as a writer of "Juveniles", and her versatility ignored. Nevertheless, her "Adult" writings form a large proportion of her works and, be it remembered, that her S.F. writings form only a portion of her output.

This Great Lady of S.F., though only in indifferent health for some years past, is recognised by 'Ace' Books as the top "best seller" of today, has a record of most impressive proportions. Before enlarging on her S.F. record, let me briefly point to other fields of writing in which she is prominent. These include novels of Piracy, Murder, Pre-Civil War and Civil War stories (the American Civil War), Westerns, Fairy Tales and pure Fantasy. Scarface is a rollicking and rumbustious novel of Piracy; At Sword's Point is a good example of a Murder/Adventure type novel with historical background. Murders or Sale is a first class Murder type novel. Stand to Horse, Rebel Spurs and Ride Proud Rebel are, as the titles imply, Civil or Pre-Civil War stories, which are based on actual diaries and documents of the period and so have a most authentic background. The Prince Commands is straight out Adventure, and Fairy Tales (for children from, say, nine to ninety years old) will be referred to later.

Fantasy is well represented in the Witch World Series, and semi-historical adventure is represented in Shadow Hawk. Though it is now over 30 years since her first book was published there are no signs of her talent for originality and versatility lessening. Rather, it seems to be strengthening. Her popularity among real S.F. fans and especially among those who, as I myself do, appreciate the admixture of S.F. and Fantasy apparent in her later writings, her novels are increasingly more readable and enjoyable. But let us look, for a short while, at the beginnings of her career as a full time professional writer.

Her first S.F. novel, Starman's Son published by Harcourt, Brace and World Inc. was the subject of, at that time, a rather risky experiment by Ace Books, being their first full length S.F. paperback, under the title of Daybreak 2250 A.D. Had this experiment failed, tis most doubtful if Ace Books would have become, as they are, the Premier Publishers of S.F. in paperbacks. The critics, for once, were laudatory, and S.F. readers wildly and extensively acclaimed the novel and it became a "Best-Seller" almost overnight. Though primarily written for

what is now termed the "Juvenile" reader, tis safe to say that ~~the adult~~ readers appreciated it as much, and more, as those same "Juveniles".

Having regard to the attitude of those who have read this article to this point, I give fair warning that I am, if possible, even more partisan in my outlook, with regard to Andre, than I have been about Anne McCaffrey, and I have nothing to offer except eulogistic comment. Tis adding to this, I am that fair and just comment on this article will if warrented, receive adequate consideration and if possible, replies direct to the person concerned. Unfair and intolerant critics may also be replied to and I have little doubt that I can, even yet, hold my own in such replies. Time, space and some difficulty in writing prevents me from going into a great deal of detail about Andre's works, except in a very brief manner, but I feel that, for the benefit of anyone interested, I should give some information about some of them.

For those young in heart, if not in age, tis recommending I am that they should read, if obtainable, Huon of The Horn. As my own copy has, literally, disintegrated through constant handling and re-reading, I can not offer to lend same but, believe me, tis well worth while reading. This novel, first published by Harcourt-Brace in 1948, is a delightful, graceful but action-filled re-presentation of the old French "Chanson de geste", about young Huon de Bordeaux, a Carolingian Fantasy of the time just after the famous "Roland" and "Oliver" perished in the Pyrenees. Young Huon rushes from "Here" to "There" and "Elsewhere", in the most approved style of the classical "Chanson". He accepts a challenge to pull out the beard of the King of Babylon, does the deed, and elopes with the King's Daughter. He meets the "Oberon" of Shakespearian fame and eventually gains the "Throne of All Faerie", when Oberon abdicates to spend eternity in Paradise. The Horn? Why, a magical one, of course, which when blown by the rightful owner, brings all aid and assistance from the Hordes of Fairies and Elves. A truly grand yarn, and the sequel, Steel Magic, is also recommended. If these are to be classed, as most reviewers seem to class them, as "mere 'kii's' stories, then equally so must be classed the old Arthurian Legends and English & Scottish Folk Tales and Legends.

Compare the above mentioned two novels with her essay into the "Adult" field, when she wrote under the nom de plume of "Andrew North", the Trilogy Sargasso of Space, Voodoo Planet and Plague Ship. Though eminently readable by the younger generation as well as by adults, this Trilogy is action-filled S.F. adventure and, judging by the number of times the books have been re-printed are as popular today as they ever were. Readers of this Trilogy who have enjoyed the novels will be pleased to learn that, by special request from Don Wollheim of Ace Books, this Trilogy is to be expanded into a series. The first of the new novels, a sequel to Plague Ship, is in the hands of the publishers now and should appear soon. The title -

Postmarked - The Stars. Watch for it. Incidentally, the first book, Sargasso of Space, had the then unique honour of being chosen as a "Special" by a German Book Club and at least nine of her novels have been translated and published in Germany. Other countries also such as England, France, Italy and Argentina have eagerly accepted books by Andre Norton.

Another series of her books, The Time Traders, Galactic Derelict, The Defiant Agents, The Sioux Spaceman and Key Out Of Time surely cannot be dismissed as mere "kids" stories, nor can "The Star" series. Those who do so dismiss them do but emphasise their own ineptitude and lack of understanding. The novels in the "Magic" series, such as Octagon Magic, Fur Magic and Steel Magic, may have been written primarily for the younger generation, but they find a very ready market among adults also, who enjoy every one of them, even as I do myself. Look at, or rather, read, her books dealing with what has been called, by a far abler writer than myself, her "Beast-Human Relationship". Books such as Catseye, The X Factor, etc, show the versatility and talent of this Great Lady of S.F. and, if they are to be classed as "kid's" stories or, as modern usage has it, as "Juveniles", here at least, is one 85 years old Juvenile who appreciates and enjoys reading and re-reading such grand novels.

Read and enjoy such novels as The Beast Master, and the sequel, Lord Of Thunder and you will find that, like most of her novels, the "Hero" is beset by problems peculiarly human in nature. Hosteen Storm, basically, is confronted with precisely the same kind of problem that confronts so many people of the here and now - those folk we call "Displaced Persons". Of course this may be dull fare for those who delight in the, what I call, "Oh-my-God!-will-we-ever-be-able-to-beat-these-horrible-repulsive-slimy-awful-wicked-unhuman-evil-Monsters" type of novel and who fall back on the old cry of "kid's" stuff. Think for a moment of a story called The Hobbit, by J.R.R. Tolkien. Professedly a children's "Fairy Tale" type of book, and - look where it has got to. Think of C.S. Lewis' series of "children's books", or even some of Shakespeare, and think also, are these great writers classed as merely "writers of Juveniles"? No, of course not. Why? The only reason I can readily supply is that they are, after all, males. For it seems that tis only the "Female of the species" that is so "tagged".

Still, putting such speculation aside, and to return to Andre Norton, much as I would like to elaborate on her novels, I fear that our worthy editor would not be able to spare the space, time or effort needed to print same. (You've got to be joking, Pat. -Ron.) However, I must mention Moon of Three Rings, Zero Stone (and the sequel to this, Uncharted Stars) Night of Masks, The Eye of the Monster, Sea Siege, Storm Over Warlock and the sequel, Ordeal in Otherwhere, The Crossroads of Time, and the sequel, Quest Crosstime; just a random few of Andre's novels. These, as no words of mine can do, fully illustrate the infinite variety of talent and the wealth of background research to be

found in the novels of Andre Norton. (Still - "Andre Norton - Phooey" Mr??).

Tis leaving, till almost the end of this article, "The Witch World" series, I've been; mostly because of the marked difference between this series and all the novels I have written about earlier. Or perhaps tis that this series is, I confess, my favourite series of Andre's novels and also because throughout the writing of the series, I was privileged to be very fully informed by letter and by tape of the problems and difficulties confronting Andre, as well as the progress of each successive novel. This series of six novels, Witch World, The Web of The Witch World, Three Against The Witch World, The Year of The Unicorn, Warlock of The Witch World and Sorceress of The Witch World, probably more correctly should be called "Fantasy" rather than S.F. Whatever classification is given them, (and surely NOT that of "Juvenile",) they are full of action, red-blooded and smoothly continuous action, from beginning to end. Hard as would be for me to choose between her novels, tis, by a very small margin indeed, that this series would top the list.

Little now remains that I can write at this time about Andre, except to add that, though as I have written earlier, she is in very indifferent health, she still plans on at least two more complete novels after finishing present commitments, during the balance of this year. So, all hail! to Andre Norton and Anne McCaffrey, Great Ladies, Great Novelists and Queens, present and future, of the "Females of the Species", and my regrets that many other Great Ladies of S.F. must, for the present, (and perhaps, to their relief) remain unwritten about by me. Later - Who knows? - ask the editor.

—oOo—

ADDENDUM

The following details are written in answer to a special request by our editor, Ron Clarke, who must, therefore, "take the rap".

Full Name: Patrick Aloysius Michael Terry.

Born: December 25th 1883.

Place of Birth: Belfast - Ireland.

Education: None. Have never attended any school in my life, except Military Training Schools.

Religion: For Record purposes only: C.of E.

Joined British Army in 1897 as a Drunner Boy. (Still unable to play a drum).

Transferred to Royal Flying Corps late 1915.

Re-transferred to British Army 1919.

Discharged early 1923.

Came to Australia late 1923.

Joined Australian Forces early 1925.

Discharged late 1948.

Started reading S.F. about 1904 and have been an addict ever since, and tis very likely twill become a permanent addiction.

Other Hobbies: Writing letters, and plain and fancy tinkering of all kinds.

(Item no.4 may serve to explain my crudities of grammar, writing, etc.).

That's all, folks.

Cheers.

- Pat.

-----ooOoo-----

T I M E W H E N .

Porous paranalia of another world,
Large greying stalks with pink antennae, curled
Mysterious within their sulphery crag

I overheard
One day your piping chords and I did dream
High on an alien mound of many things
Time's tossed aside, within your woven spell
The warp and woof of men asleep
Beyond those gates

Which no man force and so it was
I saw
The beacon lights of tiny ships
Adrift among the stars.

Those were the days, as legends tell
When faulty drives and triggered warps
Made many a Four-star general go,
Just as quick as those with no
Beyond the pale, enchanted sea
Of fell, unwish'd eternity.

And if you will then tell me, when
From in your steaming eddies then
You shall feel lead to chant again,
And I shall dream of ancient men.

Alexander Robb.

THE VIPERS OF PTAHTA

by

Herald G. Harker.

"And there gentlemen you have it," started the closing address of the lecturer, beaming all over his face as he continued, "Ptahta is now a conventional, stable, Terran type planet where the political system and the mores of the population differ but little from our own, which, as you must agree, is remarkable progress over a mere thirty years. Thank you for your attention and good-night."

The meeting broke up, with the usual mild disorder of meetings anywhere, with a general movement towards the club bar, leaving the Doyen of the club, space-commodore Sir Arnold Frothblower D.S.O. and 2 Bars etc. R.S.N. (Ret), to say the conventional things and, offer hospitality to the lecturer, who was swiftly shepherded through the crowd of members into a corner seat at the bar, with the ease and dexterity gained by the Commodore, in a thousand bars, on a thousand planets.

No sooner than each man had hitched half a cheek onto the comfortable bar stools, than a pair of enormous tankards, beaten silver, frost rimed, loomed before them. "Cheers". The lecturer sipped, the Commodore swigged deeply, wiped his iron grey moustache with a large piece of white silk taken from his sleeve, heaved a stentorian sigh and boomed, "The only decent way to drink champagne is from a tankard. These piddlin' glasses give me a pain in the unmentionables."

"Oh, quite so," murmured the lecturer, a little abashed by his first contact with the formidable, famous Frothblower, who carried on as if the other had not spoken, "By Zoroaster, you were quite right this evenin' when you talked about remarkable progress - Ptahta was a dam' sight different 30 years ago when we were settlin' the place. I had my first big staff job there as local bureau chief of Planetary Internal Security Service, (or P.I.2.S for those who speak in initials). The job was mainly liaising between the military and the administration", and for the next hour the orotund voice boomed happily, and let us admit, a little scurrilously, about the tactical errors of both parties, gathering around him a moderate sized audience of amused club members, whilst he did so.

"Why did the whole affair take so long?" asked one of the younger members, "Ten years to occupy a planet with only lower life forms to contend with seems rather a long time." The lecturer who had been musing in an alcoholic semi-daze in the corner astonished himself and answered first, "Quite simple really. The native life was remarkably terran in form but with a much higher ratio of predators and reptiles; the records show that even the rabbits were savage and as for lions and tigers, they were quite unbelievable in strength and ferocity. The ecologists bought into the

picture and insisted on a balanced reduction of the native fauna to phase out the surplus life evenly and avoid plagues of "harmless" creatures which have on other planets caused disruption in the past."

"Indupitably so," boomed Frothblower; "Probably the best illustration of this would be the notorious affair of Fergussons Viper." There was a blank silence as Frothblower punished the contents of his tankard again, repeating the ritual with the sleeve harboured white silk square.

"What, none of you heard of Fergussons Viper? Mithras preserve us. Well, back in '09 some of the settlers decided that they could do better than the Government of the day and, candidly, they couldn't have done much worse. They set up an independant state on the Southern Continent and started a hit and run guerrilla onslaught on the government forces, quite successfully at first, as guerrilla warfare always is, until the military wake up and start the same game - but I digress. Political so-called intelligence had shown us that the rebel headquarters were in a then remote part of dense jungle country quite near the present site of Ptahtopolis, the planetary capitol."

"It was decided by the powers-that-be, that a strong patrol, of company strength, should be airlifted behind the rebel headquarters, to act as an anvil, on which a frontal hammer blow would shatter the rebels and knock them for six."

"Strict operational security was maintained and a patrol under young Carruthers was dropped in. Well gentlemen, chaos ensued. The jungle here was absolutely infested with snakes; large, medium and small, of all shapes, sizes and hues, festooned from every bush, tree and blade of grass. In fact, a carpet of serpents heaved, writhed and slithered over the entire area. Gentlemen, I am not unduly chauvanistic but, I believe Tennan troopers to be equal to any in the universe, and a dam' sight better than most but, this onslaught of reptiles broke their morale completely. Panic all but set in. Carruthers did the only possible thing. Humiliating as it was, he broke radio silence and had the chaps lifted out, flown back to base at Saigoff for debriefing."

"At this point I came fully into the picture. By liaising with the Saigoff Institute of Comparative Zoology I came up with an expert exoherpetologist by the name of Gonzales, Cantharides Gonzales, a real fly fellow, lithe and incredibly quick in his reflexes. His chums called him Lightning Gonzales. Well, Gonzales certainly put the matter to rights with one short lecture which I think I can remember verbatim, even after all this time."

"Men, you have been having needless strife with these snakes, thanks to military security. If we at the institute had been consulted, which we were not, we could easily have warned you about the snakes and offered you the comfort of knowing that there is only one venomous species in that section of Ptahta. The other Ptahtanian reptiles are quite harmless."

"Then, opening a burlap bag he had with him, he tipped a lethargic snake out onto the table in front of him, where it coiled evilly and hissed nastily.

'Now men,' he continued, 'This fellow is Fergussons Viper, a fat little chap, about a metre in length and 7.5 centimetres in diameter. Ringed with alternate bands of Dark Brown and Yellow, about 3 centimetres wide, he is quite distinctive and only dangerous because he is too sluggish to get out of your way. There is only one way to treat him - grasp him firmly by the tail with both hands, slide one hand along him until you reach a point just behind his head, jerk your hands apart smartly to dislocate his vertebrae, throw him away and forget him.' As he spoke Gonzales suited his actions to his words. This demonstration of technique was most reassuring to our chaps and, with a few days practice on snakes, bought at great expense from the institute, the patrol was ready to go again, achieved its objective, and the rebellion passed away into the archives of military history."

"Gonzales and I became very good friends in the following weeks, having similar tastes in amusements. We often stepped out together to sample the night-life of Saigoff and, one evening whilst passing the hospital, we came face to face with a squal to the story: a wheelchair, being pushed by an extremely pretty Saigoffan nurse and containing a physical wreck on his way to the limb replacement bank. The poor lad was swathed in bandages from top to toe. One eye peered out from the wrappings. Left leg missing, right hand gone up to the forearm, the poor chap was in a very sorry state indeed."

His cyclopean orb fixated Gonzales and a quiet clear voice spoke from behind the gauze. 'You'r the bloke who told us about them snakes. Fine flamin' bit of advice that was. The implicit sneer irked Gonzales a little but, he was much too good hearted a chap to take open offence under the circumstances, so he bent forward and asked gently, 'What happened to you?'

'Well mate', began the trooper, 'I was a member of the patrol you lectured on snakes, and Fergussons Viper caused all this. We was in the jungle moving into position behind the rebel headquarters. I was moving along a narrow, overgrown jungle trail, practically bent double, when I spotted a Fergussons Viper across the trail in front of me. A fat little fellow 7.5 centimetres in diameter, ringed with alternate bands of Dark Brown and Yellow about 3 centimetres wide. Couldn't see quite how long he was, his head was hidden in the brush at the side of the trail. So I did what you said, grasped his tail with both hands, slipped my left hand up behind his head, jerked my hands apart to dislocate his vertabrae and found my left little finger right in the anus of a Ptaganian Tiger.'

"Well Gentlemen, one for the road?" said the Commodore.

SCIENCE AND THE SENSE OF WONDER

by

Derek Kew.

I think it obvious that to discuss the loss or otherwise of a "sense of wonder" from modern sf is to discuss in some way the changes that have taken place in sf. I realise there may be those who would argue that a "sense of wonder" is something peculiar to the reader and has little to do with the story; but to debate this is to become involved in dividing the blame for the loss (if any) between writers and reader. What I want to discuss is a factor that was, for example, stated clearly in Ditmar Jenssen's article in ASFR 6 : the scientific environment in which sf is written.

First let me emphasize that sf is a very heterogeneous body of writing. For example consider Thomas Disch's "Mankind Under the Leash" and Charles Harness's "The Paradox Men". Both these utterly different stories are classed as sf and this sort of variation has to be clearly borne in mind when discussing sf, let alone changes in sf. Further it may well be that any feeling that a "sense of wonder" has been lost from sf is due primarily to the effect of change (and lack of change) in the scientific environment on sf since that period. Thus no matter how cynical some may be of the science in sf there can be little doubt that the use of science is the distinguishing characteristic of sf. Of course the term "use of science" has to be given a pretty wide interpretation, but as Jenssen suggests, the physical environments, gadgets, concepts, etc., of sf are directly related to the scientific knowledge of the time. There may be some exceptions to this, e.g. I am not aware that time travel or parallel universes are explicit parts of any current theories in science. And there is always psi. However there has certainly been an extensive and intensive use of scientific facts and concepts over the 40 odd years of magazine sf. Admittedly the extrapolation and speculation have been considerable, but the basic ideas come from science, not from sf (with perhaps the above qualifications and even then some tribute must be paid to certain theories concerning space and time).

It is a truism to say that original plot ideas are extremely rare, but really original "scientific plots" have always been rare. What is more important to note is the continual use of given backgrounds. Of course a writer can still offer his treatment of a given theme and one doesn't hear of "mainstream" literature running out of plot ideas. Thus Heinlein may have invented the "long voyage" interstellar space ship (and just about covered every facet of the idea), but that didn't prevent Brian Aldiss from writing a richly imaginative story in "Non-Stop".

Nevertheless as a given background becomes more and more familiar then relatively the greater the importance of the characters increases. At the same time the standard of writing demanded has increased since the 1930's. The net result is that the "science part", the background, becomes more definitely background, and as I have just said, a greater amount of attention is focussed on the characters. It is this that has broadened the sf field as compared to the 30's when the majority of stories were either sf adventure, or were supported by nothing else but a plot idea.

It may be appropriate at this stage to quote from the letter columns of a pulp magazine in the late 40's: "I remember a while back in one of your editorials you expounded your ideal that science fiction must emphasise characters and less gadgets and BEMS and other old mainstays of science fiction characterisation didn't help your story any - what I read of it.... In short the plot has been unmercifully pounded, stabbed, beaten and finally hacked to death You bothered with nothing but your damned characterisation..." (I just love that last sentence).

For some years now sf has been in the paradoxical position that science is both catching up and dropping behind. This statement applies in varying degrees to different kinds of sf stories, but I think that it has an overall general validity. The catching-up process consists of the ever increasing accumulation and dissemination of scientific knowledge. To me, some of the most delightful interplanetary stories ever written were those of the late Stanley Weinbaum. Today such stories would not be printed because, quite apart from any consideration of the standard of writing, too many people would regard the backgrounds envisaged as hopelessly naive scientifically, not to say impossible. But this was not the case in 1934-35, as witness Weinbaum's popularity at the time. Perhaps the astronomical data disproving Weinbaum's conjectures existed at the time, but what mattered was the knowledge possessed by the readers. Apparently they had no trouble in achieving a "suspension of disbelief". And I doubt whether one could sustain an argument that the fans of the time cared less for scientific accuracy than present-day readers. What I am suggesting is that the knowledge of the readers and writers of the 1930's on certain, now commonplace, topics was sufficiently vague that an almost "anything goes" attitude was possible. And certainly this blithe playing with physical concepts, gadgets and alien environments is no longer as prevalent in sf (though there was a fair bit of it in the early days of "New Worlds").

What then of the new facts and theories of science? Do these offer much new scope for sf? I am afraid that the answer is No. Scientific progress since the 1930's has not produced imagination-catching concepts of the calibre of, say, atomic energy or relativity theory. And where is the concept to compete with the grandest idea of them all - that those points of light in the sky illuminate other worlds?

I do not make particular mention of quantum theory since I don't think it has been a major source of sf plots. Admittedly the famous Uncertainty Principle has been mentioned, but often this has been subject to what I regard as idealistic (in the philosophical sense) distortion.

There have been of course many advances in science since the 1930's, but no major revolution in thought as occurred at the beginning of this century. And need I point out that the 1930's were 30 years closer to that revolution? This is what I mean when I say that science is dropping behind. The advances in science, while immense, have remained in the broad framework developed since the beginning of the century. Speaking very generally there has been a tremendous increase in detail and application. I don't mean to imply that this means a lack of theoretical development; but the developments are within a given context, or refer to the development of certain technologies. And I would argue that scientific advance of this sort does not in general give an author scope for any grand play of imagination in the "science part" of his sf. For a start the greater the detail the greater the technical knowledge required to understand any further development. Speculation at this technical level is important in science, but not, in general, to what is now called "old fashioned sf". Not that I am against this sort of detail in sf; ingenuity of detail can make a difference to a story. All that I am saying is that it is difficult to make it serve as the basis of a story. Or consider that great new technology of the 20th. century - electronics. Many, many sf stories make use of this as a matter of detail. How many make it serve as the basis for the story (before the advent of computers, anyway)?

Summing up, then, I am suggesting that a particular type of sf has been most affected by the change (and lack of change) in the scientific environment in which sf operates (e.g. I don't think that Cordwainer Smith's stories are particularly subject to this type of consideration). As an example of the sort of story I do refer to, consider Charles Harness's "The Paradox Men" (first published as "Flight Into Yesterday" in a 1949 Startling Stories). To me the story is full of "sense of wonder" and the characteristic that I regard as outstanding is the way in which the "inanimate" grips the attention. I mean by this the pattern of physical concepts employed - the flight of the T22, the stations on the sun, and the way in which the various threads of the plot weave together. It is not so much a matter of characterization being neglected for gadgets and/or physical concepts as that what I have called the "inanimate" competes with the characters for attention. A crude analogy is that sort of film where the background scenery is given a lot of attention. Incidentally, Brian Aldiss in his introduction to this story mentions that it is "not fantasy, not scientific fiction, but pure science fiction" thereby proving that he Understands.

I hope there will always be room in sf for a story such as "The Paradox Men", but undoubtedly it has become very difficult to make a success of such a story. The backgrounds involved have been employed so often, and with familiarity comes the contempt. Maybe when we reach the planets something will be found to really stir the imagination (as a very minor start, how many sf writers put craters on Mars?). Here I am trusting in the fact that so far the Universe has been stranger than we think, and that maybe it is stranger than we can think (with due acknowledgement to Professor J.B.S Haldane via Arthur Clarke). Anyway, whatever qualities sf lacks that John Foyster can rubbish a story's "verbal texture", "structure" and "technical and thematic development" and yet still say it was good reading as sf, then perhaps the reverse is also possible : that a story can be good in all of these things, but still be poor as sf?

- Derek Kew.

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Syncon
c/- Box A215,
Sydney South P.O.,
N.S.W. 2000.

Dear Reader,

It is proposed to hold a Convention in Sydney over the New Year break early next year. To make this Convention a success we hope that you will be able to attend.

As yet the programme has not been finalised, but it is anticipated the major activity will take place on Friday, 2/1/70 and on Saturday, 3/1/70, with something on both the Thursday and Sunday. Likely location is in the suburb of Epping.

We are sure that we will be able to offer you an interesting weekend, representing the best in Australian fandom, so why not decide now to persuade the boss to give the Friday off and head for Sydney, city of Syn, for the Seventy Syncon.

We would appreciate any suggestions you could make, both with regard to items to leave out and items to include on the programme. Please send them to the above address.

Further details will be sent as soon as possible, if you are on our mailing list - write if you are interested.

See you in January,

Ron L. Clarke
for the "Syncon Syndicate".

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B R E V I E W S

by

Brian RichardsTHE SYNDIC C.M. Kornbluth Sphere 80¢

Cyril Kornbluth produced this work of genius in 1953, since when it has been several times reprinted. Each time I read it I am amazed at the incredible versatility of the man and at the classic lasting qualities of this book.

Kornbluth postulates a future where the Government of the U.S.A. is exiled to Greenland and where the remnants of the U.S. Armed forces occupy a tenuous toehold on the western coastal strip of Eire, the natives of which country like the rest of Europe having regressed to savagery and the practise of witchcraft. The American mainland is divided between two groups of rascals, The Mob, villains of the piece who control the mid-west and, the Syndic, permissive rascals who control the East.

The story line concerns the efforts of two Syndic members to subvert the plot of the exiled government and some members of the Mob to form an alliance in order to exterminate the Syndic. It is all extremely clever, a high level of sardonic humour being maintained throughout.

Kornbluth himself in moments of depression was given to describe this, by far his best book, as "sick". One could only wish that most putatedly healthy work were one tenth as good.

You should make the effort to buy this book whilst it is available. It would be an ornament to anybodies permanent collection.

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SUNBURST Phyllis Gotlieb Coronet. U.S. 60¢

A short version of this story was serialized in Amazing in 1964 and was in my opinion one of the few bright spots in the mass of refurbished crud being published in that magazine at the time. The story made very good reading then and this expanded version is most enjoyable.

The psi-phenomena are not too outrageous to allow the willing suspension of disbelief and the conclusion made by Mrs Gotlieb, that psi is a retrograde step in the development of homo sapiens rather than an advance is a point which is far too seldom made in books of this type. Mrs Gotlieb writes well, delineates character accurately and has a sharp empathetic view of the failings of mankind. This last feature seems to be present more in the female of the writer species than it does in the male, one wonders why.

The book is enjoyable throughout and Mrs Gotlieb joins that long list of people I would like to meet.

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THE TENTH VICTIM Robert Sheckley Mayflower 60¢

Robert Sheckley always seems to contrive his book so well that the wildest improbabilities seem completely plausible. This delightful whimsey is set in a future society which has abolished war and substituted assassination for cash prizes as a panacea for sublimating the brutal instincts of Homo Sap.

The battle of wits between the agonist Caroline Meredith in her metal plated firing bra and her ineffectual victim Marcello Poletti is a gut busting roar of mirth from go to finish.

I look forward to the film which should reach West Australia one day - one suspects that the book was first written as a film script and transliterated for publication.

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THE THIRST QUENCHERS Rick Raphael. Panther 60¢

In the main, publishers blurbs are the largest collection of claptrap, piffle and bilge which one can possibly conceive of as being devised by the putatedly literate mind of man. Rarely, oh most rarely indeed one finds blurbs which are an understatement of the case for the contents of a particular book. It is with great delight that your attention is now drawn to such an uncommon event.

I seldom quote from these choice pieces of prose which normally are far more imaginative than the contents of the book being "puffed". Indeed as a generalisation it could well be maintained that the raptures of any given blurb are in inverse proportion to the literary merit of the book praised.

Without apology you are now going to be subjected to the blurb from this book in full: "Rick Raphaels imaginings are ferociously disturbing. The water of Raphaels worlds is not allowed to run to waste: it is washed and issued again. And his redheaded goddess who suddenly appears in deep space has some unpleasantly unheavenly qualities to her. And the cattle rancher who doggedly fights off authority with its rules and regulations - he will probably prove to be the oddest old cattle rancher the reader has ever met. Raphael is a distinct find."

Also without apology you are now going to be subjected to the quotes from reviewers on the flip side of the cover. "Rick Raphael is one of the best of the new s.f. writers"

(Judy Merrill.)

"his picture of the future is the most original and best rounded since the famous Heinlein series". (Books and Bookmen).

"his stories are fascinating" - Yorkshire post.

"I want to read a great deal more by Mr Rick Raphael" - Irish Radio.

The book consists of four medium length stories, the first two of which, "The Thirst Quenchers" and "Guttersnipe", are concerned with a future world shortage of water and whilst the problems involved are very well set out technically, the stories are really notable for the studies of the characters involved which are far beyond the usual sf Dickensian caricature in thought and scope. "The Mailman Cometh" is an hilarious comedy of errors in the intergalactic postal service, whilst "Odd Man In" as a study of human dignity and future bureaucratic ineptitude is worthy of expansion into a book of its own.

A most impressive and worthwhile collection which offers full enjoyment to anybody who is not hidebound and conservative. I urge you most strongly to read it.

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FALSE FATHERLAND A. Bertram Chandler Horwitz 65¢

This happy sardonic book had many provisional titles before False Fatherland was duly agreed on. Originally Star Sparta, Fred Pohl thought Spartan Planet would be better and Bert Chandler countered with "Twin Turretted Androids from outer space". False Fatherland is the result.

I refuse point blank to say a word about the plot; you jolly well buy it and contribute to the Chandler beer and skittles fund. You may rest assured that your donation will not be wasted on this most original idea which is brilliantly executed. Chandler has a sharp eye for the weaknesses and foibles of mankind and these weaknesses and foibles are all well demonstrated in this story.

One may be wrong in judging parts of the book to be thinly veiled satirical parodies of Blish and Anderson, if so then both these good gentlefolk could benefit from reading Chandlers trenchant witty prose.

After you buy it and read it, write to Horwitz and tell them what a marvellous job they have done in giving us a medicum of this native Australian talent - it might encourage them to publish a little more sf instead of their usual crud.

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TROUBLED STAR George O. Smith Beacon 40¢
HIGHWAYS IN HIDING " " " Lancer 70¢

Two vastly different books by, it is quite hard to believe, the same author. "Troubled Star" is one of the excellent cheap reprints from Galaxy which tells the tale of how a cloddish

TV space hero is contacted by dinizens of a far galaxy! who take him seriously and give him the job of justifying the continued existence of old Earth in its present orbit. How he behaves whilst visiting yon far galaxy and how he impresses the natives particularly one of the females is all quite indescribable and astoundingly hilarious. Even the sex is comic, you must read it.

The second much more major opus, "Highways in Hiding", like the first is a reprint dating from the early fifties and is much more serious in intent if not in achievement. Here Mr Smith postulates a world where ESP has become quite normal and where we have a new variety of supermen divided into goodies who want everybody to become super and baddies who want to be a master race - trite but very well drawn up and developed. Longer than average, the suspense is well sustained through 256 pages which in quantity as well as quality show that some publishers are less concerned with a quick buck than others.

Well worth reading. A good yarn well told - some of you might even keep it.

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THE COSMOZOIDS Robert Tralius Belmont 60¢

Once in a while chance delivers into ones hands a book so incredibly awful that one is compelled to finish reading it, urged on from the first chapter almost hypnotically by the belief that nothing could possibly be this goddamned terrible, urged on by the belief that anything this bad in the early stages can only improve but, in this case, it was all a delusion.

The story started badly, strayed woefully through a morass of indecision and concluded in an overpowering cataclysm of ineptitude. It had nothing to commend it or even excuse it.

The artwork on the cover is quite good.

- Brian Richards.

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NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS :-

As you will have noted by now this issue of THE MENTOR is scheduled to be the last in this present series. Many of you are on your last subscription, others have several more issues to go. I will be publishing an enlarged issue of EOS instead of THE MENTOR when I have enough material to fill it, or when I have something to say which I think should be spread around, or if someone else has something to say and which otherwise would not see print. If you do not wish to receive EOS I will refund you your money owing in future issues of THE MENTOR. Please let me know. - RLC.

-----ooOoo-----

SF AND THE TWO CULTURES - POSSIBILITIES.

C.P. Snow in his book "The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution" put forward the idea that the intelligensia of modern society had polarised into two distinct groups with different ways of thinking, different standards, and not much communication with each other. These groups are the scientists and the 'literary intellectuals'. A gap of this kind could be dangerous for modern society, so Snow says.

A number of suggestions have been put forward as to how the gap between the cultures can be closed. One is that a general education should be given to all University graduates, and the degree of specialisation reduced. At Macquarie Uni. an attempt has been made to do this by the introduction of courses in certain disciplines intended for people not majoring in this discipline. Some of the titles of those courses are:

- Man and the World of Life.
- Man and His Environment.
- Man on His Past.
- A View of Science.
- French Civilisation and Ideas.

However, I believe that courses such as these would not ultimately solve the problem, but only delay the polarisation. What is needed is some common ground where scientist and literary intellectual can meet on equal terms as thinking men each with his own contribution to make to a common understanding. One ground probably little considered is SF.

Particularly by SF, I mean what Isaac Asimov defines in his essay, "Escape into Reality": 'SF is that branch of literature which deals with the response of human beings to advances in science and technology.' Thus SF is our society's unique literary response to what C.P. Snow calls the "Scientific Revolution". It is the best meeting place for the scientist, whose concern is "advance in science and technology", and for the literary intellectual, whose primary concern is "the human response." The fact of rapid social change is the basis of both SF and the co-operation of the intelligensia of our society. They both ask what will happen if a certain trend continues. SF tries on the various changes for size, and tries to penetrate the consequences (this is not usually deliberately done to facilitate social planning).

To have SF as an intercultural medium requires that both Cultures be educated in its basic principles and potentialities. This could be easier in some respects for scientists, who already extrapolate trends (eg overpopulation, depletion of resources, transplants, bacterial warfare, space research, psychic research, etc.). It may be harder to get them to consider the problem in individual human terms in a literary medium. If they couldn't be taught to write SF (and several scientists have shown that they can write good SF) at least they can be taught to appreciate it.

A more difficult task could be to convince the literary intellectuals that SF is indeed a respectable branch of literature. SF is new, and has no body of tradition or classics behind it as yet. It is a new form of literature in which the background is not always 'real'. There is a tendency in SF for the background to take equal positions with the characters, and not just remain passive like a backdrop on a stage, against which the characters act out their parts. This could make it seem foreign to a literary intellectual, used to tame, 'true-to-life' backgrounds. We can even accept the background of historical novels or westerns as 'real', but what about *Brave New World*, 1984, *Tau Ceti 11*, *Brobdingnag*? Is this asking too much?

Asimov proposes that there are 3 streams of this false-background literature. The first is fantasy, which is old and therefore respectable. In this form the author uses the creation of his imagination as a whip on the back of his own society. The imagined society may be the product of science or fantasy, but it is always what should or should not be, never what might be. The literary critics will have to accept the backgrounds created by plausible extrapolation for their own sake, and with no moral application. The time is possibly coming when SF will be a recognised and accepted medium, even with its own literary watchdogs.

If SF writing and appreciation is taught in the Universities, there must be a medium for continuing and developing contact. The magazines may be used for this purpose, probably with more high sounding titles that 'Astounding' or 'Fantastic'. (A good name would be 'The Mentor'). Magazines are the normal intellectual life carriers of both cultures. They allow for more immediacy than novels or anthologies. There would be a chance for scientists to give scientific criticism of writings, as well as the literary culture giving literary criticism. This may bring the Two Cultures closer together, but it may also start an intellectual war. Still, I think the possibilities justify the risk.

Snow said in "The Two Cultures : A Second Look" ; 'It is dangerous to have two cultures which don't or can't communicate. In a time when science is determining much of our destiny, that is whether we live or die, it is dangerous in the most practical terms.' It would be good to have the two cultures communicating, but if we could have them communicating in a medium capable of investigating vicariously what our destiny could be, and then using this knowledge to determine more purposefully what our destiny will be , that is even better.

Says the author of the above : ".... I have enclosed a rewritten version of an essay I did for a Biology course at Macquarie Uni. It's under a pen-name because of my insecurity complex. I hope you can use it. (I passed the course)." I did not use the pen-name, but you can see for yourselves that he needn't worry on that score. - RLC.

THREE BY ANNE McCAFFREY.WEYR SEARCH.

Drummer beat, and piper blow,
 Harper, strike and soldier, go.
 Free the flame and sear the grasses
 'Til the dawning Red Star passes.

From the Weyr and from the Bowl
 Bronze and brown and blue and green,
 Rise the dragonmen of Pern,
 Aloft, on wing; seen, then unseen.

The Hold is barred,
 The Hall is bare,
 And men vanish.
 The soil is barren
 The rock is bald.
 All hope banish.

Man and beast partnered young,
 Speak together the silent tongue.

Watch-where, watch-where
 In your lair,
 Watch well, watch-where!
 Who goes there?

Lord of the Hold, your charge is sure
 In thick walls, metal door and no verdure.

By the Golden Egg of Faranth
 By the Weyrwoman, wise and true,
 Breed a flight of bronze and brown wings,
 Breed a flight of green and blue.

Breed riders, strong and daring,
 Dragon-loving, born as hatched,
 Flights of hundreds soaring skyward,
 Man and dragon truly matched.

Honor those the dragons heed,
 In thought and favor, word and deed.
 Worlds are lost or worlds are saved
 By those dangers dragon-braved.

Dragonman, avoid excess;
 Greed will bring the Weyr distress;
 To the ancient Laws adhere,
 Prospers thus the Dragonweyr.

DRAGONRIDER.

The Finger points
At an Eye blood red.
Alert the Weyrs
To Sear the Thread.

Rise high in glory,
Bronze and gold.
Dive entwined,
Enhance the Hold.

Count three months and more
And five heated weeks.
A day of glory and
In a month, who seeks?

A strand of silver
In the sky...
With heat, all quickens
and all times fly.

Weyrman, watch; Weyrman, learn.
Something new in every Turn.
Oldest may be coldest, too.
Sense the right; find the true!

Crackdust, black dust,
Turn in freezing air.
Waste dust, spacedust,
From Red Star bare.

Wheel and turn
Or bleed and burn.
Fly between,
Blue and green.
Soar, dive down,
Bronze and brown.
Dragonman must fly
When Threads are in the sky.

Weaver, Miner, Harper, Smith,
Tanner, Farmer, Herdsman, Lord,
Gather wingsped, listen well,
To the Weyrman's urgent word.

—————ooOoo—————

DRAGONFLIGHT.

Seas boil and mountains move,
Sands heat, dragons prove
Red Star passes.
Stones pile and fires burn,
Green withers, arm Pern.

Guard all passes.
 Star Stone watch, scan sky.
 Ready the Weyrs, all riders fly!
 Red Star passes!

Gone away, gone ahead,
 Echoes roll unanswered.
 Empty, open, dusty, dead,
 Why have all the weyrfolk fled?

Where have dragons gone together?
 Leaving weyrs to wind and weather?
 Setting herdbeasts free of tether?
 Gone, our safeguards, but whither?

Have they flown to some new weyr
 Where cruel Threads some others fear?
 Are they worlds away from here?
 Why, oh, why, the empty Weyr?

Across a waste of lonely tossing sea,
 Where no dragonwings had lately spread,
 Flew a gold and a sturdy brown in spring,
 Searching if a land be dead.

Black, blacker, blackest
 And cold beyond frozen things.
 Where is between when there is naught
 To Life but fragile dragon wings?

Cold as death, death-bearing,
 Stay and die, unguided.
 Brave and braving, linger.
 This way was twice decided.

Let us not sing of dragonmen
 Though brave and strong, you know those rhymes.
 Let us a different praise intone
 Of a fearful journey between long times.

Who wills,
 Can.
 Who tries,
 Does.
 Who loves,
 Lives.

The Blackest night must end in dawn,
 The sun dispels the dreamer's fear:
 When shall my soul's black, hopeless pain
 Find solace in its darkening weyr?

Oh, Tongue, give sound to joy and sing
Of hope and promise on dragonwing.

A fleck of red in a cold night sky;
A drop of blood to guide us by.
As Turn away and Turn away, turn on,
The Red Star guides the travelers on.

Dragonman, dragonman
Between thee and thine,
Share me that glimpse of love
Far greater than mine.

- Anne McCaffrey.

Copyright Anne McCaffrey.

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EDITORIAL (cont. from p.2).

The content of TM1 was an editorial, an author's profile (of George Orwell), two stories (one by Kim Humphreys and the other by Ron L Clarke), a report on the inaugural meeting of the Normanhurst Boys' High School Science Fiction Club (NBHSSFC for short) and a request for better attendance at future meetings at the club. Not so much different to TM 16, if it comes to that.

The greatest change is in editorial policy. The policy stated in TM 1 is crystal clear. The policy at the present moment is possibly known only by the editor, and he thinks that unless he puts it down in print right now it will change again - and it probably will, anyway. With the constant criticisms and suggestions given by readers, THE MENTOR is constantly evolving towards, I hope, a better produced fanzine, contents as well as appearance-wise.

There has been, in the last few issues of TM, discussion re sex in literature, especially science fiction, and locally in THE MENTOR. Most of the discussion, from different points of view, has come from Gary Woodman in Victoria, and David Gray in Queensland. They, and others, have been discussing, at length, whether sex (and swearing) should be in stories of science fiction. I do not know what they think my attitude about it as editor is, though I presume they take it for granted it is one way or the other. By "sex" I take it is meant "love in its physical aspect" (as distinct from so called "romantic love", which I will define for this editorial only as the psychological (or spiritual if you like) attraction between two human beings - not very definitive, I admit, but it is the best I can do at this moment in time).

That sex is one of the basics (or cornerstones) of human life is now a widely accepted belief and as such is being portrayed in studies of life - e.g. in books, cineme, on stage, etc. Science fiction being one of the more conservative branches

of literature it has been only fairly recently that pressure has been brought to bear on the medium to produce more mass-orientated stories, and stories with more depth of characterisation. This meant bringing in sex and religion (one of the other 'cornerstones').

A story which is done as a whole entity and which has sex intergrated in it, even though the central plot may be based on a sexual device (as with Farmer's A Woman a Day) can still be a well written novel which is written not as pornography is, ie to cheapen sex or present sex as something sordid or "dirty", but to show sex as a part of the ordinary process of life, then such a story can be of the greatest help to the field and to the understanding of ourselves and society (harking back to the blurb on Farmer's Strange Relations - "By their Fantasies shall ye Know Them (or the gospel according to Freud)."

What is my attitude to all this? There is a hint given in Phoenix in TM 15, if you care to look, and anyway, THE MENTOR speaks for itself, does it not?

There has been a suggestion (by John Foyster) that I do not take my editing seriously. I do - that is why I do as less of it as I can get away with. At the present time I am working on the following premise : that folk submitting material to a magazine such as THE MENTOR do it for one of two reasons; a) to give their own opinions and ideas an airing, and b) to see what others think of their ideas or stories and what advice others could give in the way of constructive criticism so as to enable them to better their writing abilities. Now, if an editor changes an article or a story to suit himself, or changes the wording and then prints it, the writer is really being cheated, as it is only the opinion of the editor that he is getting as to what is wrong (or good) about his material. On the other hand, if the work is printed whole, with no deletions or changes, then the entire readership can comment on the writers original work and the writer can get a wider range of opinions that will help him, rather than the one, however broad, of the editor, who, after all, is limited to his personal experience.

The above is how I have been working for the last two or three issues, and I consider that it is in the writer's favour. And that is, after all, why I am publishing THE MENTOR - because I like to help others see themselves in print and because I just plain like putting out a magazine that is recognised in all circles all over Australia.

The Fururian Society of Sydney's rooms had an atmosphere. As soon as you walked in off the street and up the stairs at 96 Phillip Street you could feel the difference. As well as being ill-lit, the place had a dry, musty smell. As soon as you walked through the door on the 3rd floor you were bloody sure of it.

and you saw what caused it. Along three walls of the tiny (15'X 15') room were six-foot high racks of pre war Astounding, Amazing, Thrilling Wonder, Weird Tales, and other fabulous goodies of the crumbling yellow pulp variety. There were ancient tomes of flaking '50s hardcovers and racks of Ace books and other paperbacks to brighten the place up.

If you had walked in about 2 pm as I usually did, you would probably have met Graham Stone (with crewcut) and Kevin Dillon (minus beard) talking industriously about sf with a cup of evil smelling coffee in their hands. (I don't think I will ever forget the taste of that stuff - I can still remember it). As I was saying, the atmosphere was unique - the Melbourne Science Fiction Club does not have it, nor the SSFF or later meetings of the Futurian Society. It was an atmosphere of, well, leisure and armchair conversation (though Graham was almost always working with the duplicator or booking FSS library books in and out, and the chairs were straight-backed and spartan). I imagine the magazines and books did the most to give the atmosphere, as did the ancientness of the buildings. As a result, when I think of an "sf club", that is the image conjured up and to a young fan just entering sf socially it left a lasting impression.

One other person I met there also left a lasting impression. I had been there for a few Saturday afternoons when I walked an old gentleman with cane in one hand and an airway bag of returned books in the other. After having rested on a chair to get his breath back after having climbed three flights of steep stairs he dumped the books on the table and set about choosing some more to read. I don't think Pat Terry has changed all that much since I first saw him then, in late 1964, though he tended to talk less then, from what I remember. Although at the time he was I think, as I was, just becoming acquainted with organised Australian fandom.

When the FSS was disbanded in late 1965 I lost contact with all the members except several letters from Graham Stone and Kevin Dillon. It was thus somewhat of a surprise that I received a letter from Pat Terry, asking me, that since there was no regular meeting place in Sydney for sf fans, would I like to come and discuss sf with him. I wrote a reply saying, yes, I would, and thus began a series of informative and extremely interesting discussions, which persist to this day, only limited now, I admit, to when I get tired of stenciling and take the Saturday afternoon or week night off from fan publishing and go visiting Pat.

There have been a lot of words and a lot said in print about Pat - it seems that it is unusual for people who meet him to not make up their minds how they think of him. Pat is Irish, and he has had a full life with a lot of experiences and has been reading sf for 66 years (see page 27), and this adds up to a person who has opinions about sf which are backed up with a

very wide reading in the field, and who has the willingness to stand by them and also to change them when he is convinced they do not do justice to their subject. Before a person can pass judgement on another he has to make sure he has all the facts and be sure he knows the person concerned in depth. Not from just one or two meetings.

Science Fiction fans are very individual (and unique) people - possibly more individual than most people, and as such there is bound to be friction between them. There are two choices. sf fans can make when they meet - to get along or not to get along. And this is not only in personal contact but in all forms of communication - letters included.

There are some people who think it is enough to not start a feud, others if there are hot words flowing, to continue, with the idea of letting the other person pull out or finish it. There are others who go out of their way not to offend. It depends, of course, on a person's maturity. What is needed is what not many fans apparently have - insight into how the other person is thinking or will think, when the communication is received by him.

I have said before that distance is the barrier to Australian sf fan's relationships. The latest series of Interstate conventions are helping to break it down with more personal contact, but it is still there and it encourages mis-understanding. The conventions are also good advertisements for sf in the local district and for Australia's recognition overseas. It may be that we will have a World Convention here yet. There is still the Barrier though, and it will take a hell of a lot of effort in breaking it. I've done something to help break it, have you?

In this editorial I have said a lot more than I usually do and I hope that what I have been writing of will be of interest to someone, even if it means that it will help someone starting his own fanzine to have some ideas of how to put it out, contents wise.

As you can see by the advertisement in this issue, a Convention is proposed to be held in Sydney over the New Year break in 1970. This convention can only be a success if people turn up to be in on it. This does not necessarily mean that you would have to give a lecture or talk or take part in a panel discussion. What the Syndicate of the Syncon would like to know is : are you interested in having a Convention held in Sydney over the New Year in 1970 and would you be interested in coming. It is no use at all in holding a Convention and having no people turn up. So could you read the advertisement on page 34 and drop us a line?

As a last word about Pat Terry, let me say this: I am proud to know him.

- Ron L Clarke.

o o o o o o

"SWEET DREAMS, SWEET PRINCES"Reviewed by David Gray.Analog magazine, Oct. '64.

Quote from serialised novel by MACK REYNOLDS.

"It was the Welfare State, People's Capitalism, so called, and there was security for all from the cradle to the grave. The most improvident fool had no manner in which to squander the Inalienable basic common stock shares which were issued him, according to the caste into which he was born. Each month, his dividends were deposited to his credit account, nor was there any way to steal his Inalienable stock, nor to gamble or con it away from him. Each citizen of the West World was secure if he wished to be or not. Medical care, education, even entertainment, was free. Entertainment above all, and the overwhelming majority spent the greater part of their lives before their telly sets, sucking on their trunk pills for happiness, watching the screen for the excitement of the ultimate entertainment- violent death, as to be witnesses in the fracas and the gladiatorial games.

Of course, given ambition, and the good fortune to be born into a category which still offered chances at employment, having not been completely automated out of existence it was possible to acquire additional shares of common stock. Such shares could be bought and even in the face of all but confiscatory taxes, an ambitious man could place himself in position to increase his basic income considerably - given the chance to work. However, it could prove difficult for one born, say, in Category Food Preparation, Sub-division Cooking, Rank Chef, since cooking was no longer done by individuals. Automation had taken over with a vengeance in this field."

This story is set in the Americas about the year 2000 give or take a decade or two. Mack Reynolds has extended the present trends of the economies of such countries as the Iron-curtain countries and the so called Western World, to it's logical conclusion. The United States has amalgamated with South America and governs the whole of the Americas, even Canada I should think. Automation has played havoc with the economy, and vast social changes have taken place. Displaced workers had to receive payment of money on which to live, and buy the goods produced by automation, so it appears all industry was nationalised, and each citizen was paid a national dividend, by right of birth. More could be earned if work was available, but for the majority there was no work. Earlier, there must have been some hard fighting to get this work, for the ultimate in 'Direction of Labor', was introduced, that, whatever the fathers' trade, the children took that grade and could not change it, and to add to this a graduated system was introduced ranging from 'Lower' through to Upper-Upper, the Upper-Upper being the rulers and key public-servants and politicians, the 'Lower', being the common people of lowly abode. (continued on page 53.)

A Y E S S E F F A R

A Poem by Herald G Harker

(with apologies to Henry Wordsworth Longfellow)

having also an appropriate dedication
to a gentleman of quality.

John Bangsund having in a mood of great depression closed down A.S.F.R., sometime ago, has now reconsidered his decision and re-opened it again. (Oh Joy oh Bliss.)

Whilst wishing that the respected and aformentioned Banger would make his bloody mind up, Herald G Harker wishes to proffer the following tribute to a great Australian fan.

John Bangsund

"The Sage of Ferny Gulch."

I.

The shades of night were falling fast,
 As through old Ferntree Gully passed,
 A youth, who bore with fire in voice,
 A fanzine with a strange device.

Ayasseffar!

II.

From strength to strength at first he went,
 To mighty purpose giving vent,
 This stentors torrent, deep and wide,
 In which all fandom took great pride,

Ayasseffar!

III.

"O stay" The Woodman said, "and rest
 Your laurels in, whilst at the crest,
 You tread the paths where only few go,
 And now they nominate for Hugo,

Ayasseffar!

IV.

"Now here" The Jeremiahs call
 "This success can not last at all,
 To help him produce, we do not need,
 That fanzine now is prime indeed,

Ayasseffar!

V.

"Try not for class" old leehard said,
 "Dull lowers fandom overhead,
 With roaring apathy deep and wide,"
 But loud a clarion voice replied,

Ayasseffar!

VI.

At break of day : as in a clois er,
 The venerable voice of Foyster,
 Uttered his oft repeated saw,
 "Fandom will not really work for,

Ayasseffar!

VII.

His jobs he lost : his soul lost light,
 He stood in grave financial plight,
 About him spectral bailiffs shone,
 And from his lips escaped a moan
 Ayesseffar!

VIII.

His brow was sad : his eye beneath
 Flashed like a falchion from its sheath,
 Saying like a silver clarion chime,
 "I shall no longer publish mine
 Ayesseffar!

IX.

There in the twilight cold and grey,
 Lifeless but beautiful it lay,
 And from the sky serene and far,
 Came news, there was a fallen star,
 Ayesseffar!

X.

Beware! The leigheds withering glance,
 Beware! his scornfull avalanche,
 Then fandom all were heard declaim,
 "Your fanzine must yet remain,
 Ayesseffar!

XI

O happy day : he saw the light
 Of fandoms fires, gleam warm and bright
 And though behind him, failure shone,
 His fanzine now will not be gone,
 Ayesseffar!

- herald G. Harker

12-4-69.

—————oooooooooooo—————

THE R & R DEPT.

Stuart Leslie
59 Mary St., Longueville 2066.

Ron,

Long my favorite author, Cordwainer Smith has always been something of a mystery to me. Delighted as I was with the ASFR special memorial issue, I still felt that there was much more to be said; questions unanswered. I was ecstatic to find Bruce Gillespie's perceptive and intelligent article remedied many deficiencies, being perhaps, the best piece of literary criticism I have seen in an Australian fanzine. Unfortunately I am still mystified: how did Smith/Linebarger achieve that strange and alien quality of his universe - a universe not quite ours. It is this poetic otherness which holds the essence of his fascination. But this something we lesser mortals cannot understand - perhaps it is the distinguishing quality of genius.

No.15. "Phoenix" is a curiously rough piece. Did you really plot it beforehand? or just start writing and let ideas lead where they may? The story jumps bewilderingly and the writing is chopped, wasteful and primitive.

I think your basic problem is treatment. You are telling a cosmic saga on the destiny of humankind. Despite it being quite long for an amateur piece you have developed no facet of the plot adequately. Your people never come alive and there is no sense of drama, no heightening of expectancy or tension as there surely should be with a theme of this sort.

As I see it, you have mixed your focal lines. On one hand you relate events over-objectively, and on the other you attempt to use characters which never become more than names, robots. The shifts of view never allow to develop any feeling or sympathy with fate and life, and a lack of economy in the writing - pseudo-scientific explanation mixed with irrelevant detail - adds to the lifelessness of the prose. Everything in a story should be there for a purpose: the ultimate objective of the story.

You could have taken one of two approaches (speaking in the third person): 1. Treat your plot as did Stapledon in "Last and First Men", entirely detached, treating the race as a unit. 2. Relate events through individuals, focusing outwards through their perceptions and reactions; this does not preclude straight narration, but never confuse narration with detached observation. Because you jump from level to another and thus never develop either one, the reader does not become involved, has no empathy. Thus the story fails. Nice try. Read Ballard's "The Waiting Grounds" in New Worlds 88. (One of his earlier, comprehensible pieces).

The satire on some of the rather unintelligible stories in New Worlds was good but could be done better or in different

ways. I don't mind grappling with difficult concepts and experimental writing is often valuable in extending the possibilities of the language; but surely the purpose of language and writing, its very being, is communication! If authors bury their ideas in illogical gabble and affected technique I have little time for it.

It seems to me that Gary Woodman has entirely missed the point of BARBARELLA. If he could not see the Ubangi-like distortion of cheek caused by a huge tongue therein he must be blind! Where's ya sensa huma? The whole thing was a colossal send-up and David Hemmings' performance as an inept and frustrated revolutionary was one of the most brilliantly underplayed comic performances I have ever seen.

Don't bother difending your language Gary! If people are going to be offended by a few mild swear words what must they think of all the (dare I write it?) S-X used by every writer from Shakespeare to Joyce to Heinlein even. And what about Onan & Sodom and Gomorrah and the Great Whore of Babylon.

For heavens sake keep THE MENTOR going. I'll even write an article or a story or a poem or a something (most likely). God help us, Every one!!!

P.S. Gary ain't the only one with a drawer full of back covers. Yaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa.....

- S. Leslie.

SWEET DREAMS, SWEET PRINCES - Cont. from p.48.

Poverty had been abolished, and the national dividend, (major monetary reform) provided for all needs and luxuries, but as usual the average man was still in bondage, control has shifted from indebtedness, via financial control, to the Authoritarian state. All transactions were via the credit card, money was of no importance anymore, as had happened in Russia after the 1917 revolution, control turned from money to the machinegun.

- David Gray.

Brian Richards
50 Shenton Rd., Swanbourne, W.A. 6010.

Dear Ron,

Sorry for the delay on this, have been busy writing letters of denial to my accusing friends - on with the motley and out with the axe.

Bruce Gillespie. In my admittedly biased viewpoint, there is

no room for dispassionate criticism and thoughtful analysis by the uninvolved critic in the field of science fiction, which as a literary form can mean almost anything that the individual reader wishes it to mean, and should therefor be written about only by those who have a personally defined viewpoint which is for, or against the work of an author, in whole, or in part.

Mr Gillespie has tried very hard to convey an enthusiasm for the work of Cordwainer Smith, which to me seems patently absent from his feelings - how can anybody claim in all seriousness to be a Cordwainer Smith fan and, in the next breath announce that he possesses books by this author lying unread in his collection?

Mr Gillespie has produced an erudite article in true pedagogic pedestrian fashion but, the simple excellence of Smith has been overwhelmed by the literary expertise of Gillespie - the poor man's Panshin.

Gary Woodman made me feel quite uneasy when my own phone rang.

LZ:D 203:7 Deliriously funny; when are you going to publish this as a separate book - ghu we need these belly laughs occasionally.

Ron L Clarke. You print these delightful snippets and then procede happily to do nothing further about it - when are you going to complete something and stop the Tantalus act.

(pause :- I had reached this point when ish 15 arrived - shame on me, oh blush, oh embarrassment - that message on page 34, I cringe - I live to grovel.

Please Mr Editor do not hiberbate, I will be a good boy in future if you will only agree to estivate.)

End of pause, back to Ron L Clarke.

You are a phingue, determined to make me eat my words aintcha!! Why not sell things like Phoenix for cash money to support THE MENTOR? The quality is too good for a fanzine, but with problems of filling I s'pose your conscience drove you to it.

Harker. As everyone plays guessing games can I vote for Zian Wilkinson or possibly Michael Black, who did his usual good job with "Tuesday". Another snippetiser - come on Mike, get with it.

- Regards,
Brian.

Ronald E. Graham
Box 57, P.O., Yagoona, N.S.W. 2199.

Dear Ron,

Congratulations on THE MENTOR No.15. Sorry to note that you may have to go into hibernation if contributions do not come in greater quantity. We are all to blame here I feel.

Well Ron, quite a few things have happened to me since I last wrote you.

I attended the British Convention at Oxford over Easter and took the opportunity to join the B.S.F.A. The Convention was well attended, and, I had the pleasure of meeting a great many British and some Continental fans. Ted Carnell, Ted Tubb, Ken and Pam Bulmer, Frank Arnold, Syd Bounds, John Brunner, Brian Aldiss, Michael Moorcock, Judith Merril, Don Wollheim, David Kyle, Beryl Mercer, Archie Mercer, Graham Boak, Anne Keyloch, James White and a host of others, not forgetting the inimitable Wally Gillings.

The German fans sent quite a contingent, and, I had the pleasure of meeting Franz Ettyl and sampling his famous - or infamous - concoction "Verguzz". Potent stuff this. They were a fine bunch of chaps and girls and added much to the festivities of the Con. They were campaigning, of course, for "Heidelberg in 1970", and I sincerely hope that the World Convention will be convened there next year. They have reserved the whole town of Geidelburg for the Con. week and have really gone out on a limb over it. Even if they do not win the ballot for the World Con. - most unlikely I think - they will hold an "International Con." there. I, for one, hope to be at Heidelberg next year. It should be a fabulous event. **I hope to be there too, if this bus trip makes out. By-the-way, does anyone know a diesel mechanic who would like to go to the UK on an 80 day trip by bus for about \$500 (including everything)? Seriously. - RLC **

I was given the opportunity to address a meeting of the B.S.F.A. held in conjunction with the Con., and took the opportunity there to read a letter from our good friend Pat Terry sending news and greetings to his British Pen Friends. A great number of them were at the meeting and all expressed tremendous interest in news of Pat and for a while I was besieged by his old pen friends, many of whom had lost touch with him since his illness. Letters had been returned to several of them marked "not known at this address" and they were delighted to receive up-to-date news of Pat and his health and particulars of his new address which will be given prominence in the next issue of the B.S.F.A. journal.

Phil Harbottle and myself were invited to address the regarding our plans for VISION of Tomorrow and other publications, and this we did. There have been several developments here which I should tell you about. We were proposing to issue VISION of Tomorrow in paperback format, and in fact printing was underway for this, but talks with all interests concerned in Britain have led to a re-appraisal here.

The paperback market in Britain is saturated and tremendous competition exists for newstand display space. There is, however, a definite place for a science fiction magazine, providing it is in magazine format and not a paperback format. We have decided therefore that VISION of Tomorrow will be published

in a magazine format, $8\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{7}{8}$ " size - all new stories - semi-slick paper - full colour cover and a double page interior spread in full colour, plus generous interior illustrations in black and white. This change of thinking will, unfortunately, delay the issue of VISION of Tomorrow until approximately September, due to the necessity to do the interior artwork and plan the layout of the magazine. It will, however, I believe, be worth waiting for and will give VISION of Tomorrow a chance to be a financial success from the start. (** It certainly will be, if all the above is put into it. Full colour interior spread. Wow! - RLC. **)

We propose also to publish a companion magazine - same size - which has not yet been named to bring to public attention in Britain and Australia great SF of the past which has not seen publication there - particularly the "Golden Amazon" Series of John Russell Fearn, the majority to date published only in the "Toronto Star Weekly".

There is also a possibility of a third magazine - a translation of a phenomenally successful German science fiction series - but more of this later.

I attended the Lunacon at New York held at the Hotel McAlpin, next door to the Empire State Building, and there met a host of SF personalities, John W. Campbell, Robert W. Lowndes, Hans Santesson, Forrie Ackerman, Sam Moskowitz, Ed Wood, Andy Porter, Don Wollheim once again, Dick Witter, Ann and Franklyn Dietz, Walt Cole, Anne McCaffrey, Ted White and many many more. I was here given the opportunity to address the Con to plead the case for the World Con for Heidelberg in 1970 and hope that my few remarks may help their case.

As you might imagine, I purchased for my library a vast amount of material, and it will, I imagine, be arriving for come. My good friend G. Ken Chapman was kind enough to invite me to a lunch at his club in London on my arrival there to meet his wife and Ted Carnell and his wife, and this was quite an interesting meeting. Ted Carnell, as you probably know, represents quite a few Australian authors as well as a large number of British ones, and we had a very interesting discussion on quite a variety of points, including rates.

Wishing you every success with THE MENTOR and hoping sincerely that you will see your way clear to continue publication.

- Ron Graham.

Gary Woodman

c/- President, Monash Uni. S.F. Assn., Monash Uni., Clayton 3168.

Dear Ron,

Well here it is May, and I'm loccing the May issue of TM which I have had for nearly a month. Usual excuses apply.

Cover fine, even at short notice; makes you wonder

what Brosnan can produce when he works on it (TM 14?).

I seem to recall, vereral issues ago, a part of a story by one Ron L. Clarke, entitled "Phoenix". Now in this issue there is a Ron L. Clarke story called "Phoenix". Can it be, Mr. Editor, that Ron L. Clarke calls all his stories "Phoenix"? (** Well, there is a story coming up called "Son of Phoenix"....- RLC.**).

It's - well, not bad. It's too alien for my taste. Get Bruce to explain further.

L : ZD LCL:L is better than ever, but what sort of a comment can one write?

Brian Richards' review has convinced me that I should read the book; God knows when I'll get around to doing so.

Michael Black's story incomprehensible as usual.

I was gradually gaining the impression that the pictures painted of Graham Stone were somewhat blacker than the truth. From the letter you published, I see that this is not so. Graham Stone is everything said of him.

That there above must be the shortest loc I've ever written; TM 15 must have been a bad issue.

- Gary Woodman.

David Gray
22 Tuckett Rd., Salisbury, Qld. 4107.

Dear Ron,

Again I announce that followers of Science Fiction are the new advanced Homo Sapien, we who follow this soul-searching original literature are pioneering the dawn of a new day. And then we can all knock-off and earn enough money to buy the baby some shoes.

During my leisure hours I spend my time annoying young boys, that reads a bit queer, so I shall re-phrase that statement. When by much pressure from my children I became a Scouter, I was lucky to be trained and now serve with s Scoutmaster who runs the best troop in this District. He is a bricklayer by trade but spends all other spare-time organising his troop of fifty boy Scouts and two Assistants. He had intelligence and initiative above normal, and naturally he has extra organising ability, which is essential as the SM. I have worked with him for three years and appreciated his leadership qualities, to such an extent that I suspected that he is one of the "New Elite". I have never questioned him about his reading of the soul-searching advanced type literature that is pioneering the dawn of a new day. However, at our last camp over the long weekend he spent all one evening converting us to SF. Take heart

readers I have more in this vein, about my experiences as the new man of our lost generation, that caused world catastrophe in '39, then started the decline of all hope in the younger generation by dropping that nasty A bomb on our now new masters of the oriental 'Australasian Outback' Mitsuit or something.

Ten years ago when I was still struggling to become known, and my wife was sick every other week, and I had three small children, and I couldn't pay the rent - I knew that all my troubles were caused by the government. So - I joined a small but nationally known political group that promised currency and credit reform and promised to bring to birth the dawn of a new civilisation. Well, another 'new-homo-sapien' joined a little later, I didn't know at the time that he was 'One', he owned a newsagent business, and had previously been a bookmaker, which he gave all-up to become a book salesman (I can't spell) Encyclopaedia. Because of his superior intelligence or his superior-being he was made Party-boss, State President, and I because of my superior intelligence was made State Secretary. He spent much time trying to convince me that I should read SF, naturally our political reform suffered, and when we stood as candidates for the elections we would harangue the crowds with SF stories of the birth of a new civilisation. We would stand on street corners and pronounce the policies of Robert Heinlein, Mack Reynolds, Jack Danvers, Isaac Asimov, John Campbell. We canvassed the people in their homes and put posters up in many places, put masses of pamphlets in letter-boxes. I had the most unpleasant experience early one Saturday morning, we used to start out early in those days we were so keen, when I knocked on the door of this flat in my electorate. The door was opened by a young lady who was in the nude. I would have entered at her invitation but she did not use the toothpaste that had sex-appeal, nor did she use that soap that washes away BO. However, come election day we manned the polling-booths with much confidence and told the people to vote for us, and the birth of the new civilisation. Anyway our President polled 105 votes and I polled 98.

Now all this goes to prove that SF enthusiasts come from all sections of the community, that they have qualities that are not easily recognised by the poor almost extinct, (will become extinct) masses.

This type of constructive thinking as put forward in SF writing may be the one saving factor in the now advanced 'Decline and Fall' era that the world has embarked upon. There appears to be two main sections of SF writing, one is the warning type, which says, if we go on doing this, the end result will be so and so. The other category shows us a new way of life, and asks, do you want to work for this, for here lies hope for a better way of life. It is my opinion that SF will have a much greater and lasting effect than the 'Student Revolt' and it is obvious to me that none of these revolting students are SF readers. The riots are world-wide, well organised, planned for a purpose, with the student used as pawns and wielded

like a sledge-hammer with about as much intelligence. For about the same purpose as the Trade Unions are used. My guess as to the reason is only a well calculated guess, but you think about it all the same. If you were the world supreme authority and wanted the excuse to impose harsher laws in places where you did not have complete control yet - would it not be a good idea for you to promote riots and lawlessness, until the populace demanded harsher measures to deal with this law-breaking. And for the 'good' of the people harsher measures were used, more restrictive laws introduced, and where do we end up worse than 1984.

The extract from "SWEET DREAMS, SWEET PRINCES" (page 48) was written by me in '64 and still makes interesting reading....

- David Gray.

Bruce R Gillespie, S F COMMENTARY,
PO Box 30, Bacchus Marsh, Vic 3340.

Dear Ron,

Each time I've looked at THE MENTOR over the last two or three months, I have cringed noticeably. I am at a loss to explain my lack of contact. I thoroughly enjoy the magazine when it comes, but the last few months have been extremely busy. They've just gone, with little enough evidence of their passing. I did nothing on my own magazine for five weeks, except to write a few overseas fans and fanzines (**Now you begin to understand why I write short letters. - RLC.**). I suppose teaching is just too time consuming a job. In the words of one greater than I, why can't we make money in this game? Beats teaching any time... or anything else. (**And there, readers, is the reason why Bruce may not have answered your letters -**)

Number Fourteen was better than Number Fifteen...especially that classy Cordwainer Smith article. I cringed to see 4000 words enclosed in 15 pages. Why do I have to have the biggest type of any Australian fanzine? I may ask for reprint rights one of these days, especially if no overseas fans receive THE MENTOR? On the other hand, George Turner has written something much better than this on Cordwainer Smith, for SFC. In the words of one Great Brosnan, Why Bother?

The fiction was awful, as usual, but I may just as well explain why. I hope Woodman really doesn't think THE PHONE RANG is original. Surely it's the oldest line in the book. Besides, I object to stories where characters "grind their teeth", "bellow into microphones" and "stand paralysed, apprehension mounting into their throats". Besides the fact that I've heard all that before, it just doesn't seem a very accurate account of the way people act in quite severe crises, unless they already have bad tempers. As Leiber's THE WANDERER showed quite magnificently, people will do their best to rationalize the unbelievable for as long as

possible, and until calm just cannot be maintained. In short, the last thing that people will do is face the truth of their circumstances, whatever those circumstances. As 2001 and THE WANDERER both showed, often such a confrontation would send us mad. I'm glad Woodman wrote the story so I could write this crit - I might not have realized that simple point if it had not been for the way this story is written. "Believable characterization" is not just a catchword - it sums up the attempt to catch all the implications of any human situation. You just can't do it unless you know the nerve-ends of your raw material. .. Thank St. Antony I don't ever try to write fiction! I would then have to try to put some of this advice into practice. The mind cringes. Go to it, Gary...write, write, write. Even Jack Wodhams is improving.

Ditto for your story, Ron. I think your style is even better than Gary's. It's much sparer, and you really do your best to tell a tale as cleanly and competently as possible. Unfortunately it's very hard to read your stories, because there is not a single word of originality in any of them. They fall flat on the mind, because they've been read so many times before. Sorry about that, Ron, but there really are very few "gimmicks" left in sf. Perhaps it would be better to do what Moorcock did with virtually the same idea as yours Ron (in BEHOLD THE MAN) - take the idea as deadpan as possible and then try to elevate it by the use of meta-physics, myth-making, or simply original storytelling. (**Two time machines? -RLC **) I don't know how you can improve. Your stories seem to have a structure, which collapses like a meringue when the reader bites into the texture of the things. You have this odd habit (especially in PHOENIX, which I found incomprehensible in places) of compressing too much, until that vital line, or those important couple of sentences, that would have unlocked the structure, are left out altogether. But, as I say, you have some idea of what you're doing, and I don't see any reason why you shouldn't improve a lot.

I rather like Brian Richards' review of INTERNATIONAL SF No 2, without approving of the way he did it. I still think the best way to review a collection is to choose some representative samples of the whole, and mention the exceptions. ISF No 2 seemed very uniform to me, with some very entertaining pieces indeed, and few bad stories. The whole thing was suffocatingly reminiscent of the Carnell magazines - presumably this is as much the translators' styles as the writers'. I suppose it's the same watered down 1940's ASTOUNDING that NEW WORLDS and SF ADVENTURES were for some time. Highly appreciated though, and nearly as good as the latest Pohl-Del Rey offering WORLDS OF FANTASY. Get this sort of story in GALAXY and IF, and a lot more people would be happy, if not satisfied. ::: ISLAND OF CRABS was marvellous, wasn't it? Take a lesson, Ron. Not an original idea, but the imagery looked original, and the ending was just that shade doubtful as to make us read on. (**That's strange, the story read to me like a 1929 AMAZING STORIES QUARTERLY story. I suppose it is the way you look to see...-RLC**)

Gary answered David Gray quite satisfactorily. Why use sex and swearing? Why not? I know the types of people who are genuinely offended by the same, and I haven't much respect for them. People like me who put themselves at arm's length from their own bodies, only push away themselves. So I am neurotic. So, probably, is David Gray, and all of us. I wish more of us would realize the fact. I mean, does David Gray really think that "demonstrations, drug addiction and pornography" are really on the increase? The only thing that is on the increase, as David admits himself, is the publicity of these things. And the publicity machine is a new creation, with dynamics of its own. This needn't mean a tut tut reaction, though. Like every other phenomenon it can be analyzed, thought about, and provide the basis for new action. With a bit of luck there's an sf story in it. The last thing one can afford to do, especially if you disapprove is to turn away and try to think about something else. That's why university students have become so obviously out of place during the last few years. The differences in total viewpoints (Ed Murrow compared with Marshall McLuhan) between the current generations has become violent simply because of the totality of the difference. It makes me feel pessimistic when neither side is willing or able to see the other side's point of view. It becomes increasingly obvious that there is no middle viewpoint. Bourgeois me tends to be cynical in such a situation - laugh at both sides, and avoid the Mace and thrown rocks. It's not an admirable attitude, but it may be the only way of survival until there is some consensus of attitude again on one or other of the current important issues. But remember... we science fictioners were the ones who got excited about the increasing rate of change in today's world. Well, here's the result - a complete severance of communication between some groups of older people and some groups of younger people in the community. And if the "students stopped demonstrating and started thinking about what authorities do" they would be even more horrified than they are now. Have you ever met anyone who really will tell you what happens inside the Public Service or in the biggest of businesses? "Secret government" is the understatement of the century.

LEIGHAWATHA was beautiful and accurate and could only have been written by Big Chief Jonbang himself. Pity help NEW WORLDS when Banger does his Ballard sendup (you didn't know about that either? Neither does Banger. Print this in large black type. ONWARD HERALD HARKER, NO MATTER HOW MANY MILLION NAMES OF GOD HE HIDES).

Finis 14, onward to 15. A fanzine doesn't stand up well with mainly fiction, but that cover is magnificent. You wouldn't like to prod Brosnan one day, gently, and say: "There's a quiet unassuming bloke down somewhere in the middle of Victoria who has this nice unassuming magazine with chunderous art, and who doesn't know an HB from T-square, and wants to impress Overseas Fans, and sent you a copy of S F COMMENTARY, and you haven't sent an LoC, ... you know, John, you know..." I dare you Ron. I'll pay for the broken teeth.

As I said before, PHOENIX is nearly unreadable, but it's ambitious. All it needs is some original prose, and a few ideas I haven't read in the last couple of years and y'never know.

Thanks for the NABULA winners. I've not heard any other news. The awards raise all sorts of nasty questions. How is the Australian fan, for instance, supposed to keep up with overseas awards, when we haven't seen half the stories that make recent lists. We know that the field is moving away from the magazines, but I don't think we had realized before just how low the reputation of the magazines had fallen. I don't know the origins of any of the short stories, and I vaguely guess that MOTHER TO THE WORLD comes from ORBIT 3, which I have sitting on some dusty shelf somewhere. The awards are idiotic, which must say something about the awarders, but just what I would rather not say.

....SFC's 3 and 4 should go on stencil this week (school holidays -May) and I hope they will be sent out simultaneously. WARNING: No one will receive a copy of SFC after the issue, unless I receive some evidence of interest. This goes especially for Australian fans. I don't mind a 50-copy run for Number 3, but just don't be surprised if you don't receive it.

I haven't a clue what TUESDAY was about, and I don't know what Woodman and Kewley's thing had to do with NEW WORLDS. In my experience, NV stories are literate, if not coherent.

(**Would anyone like to attempt to tell me why something that is labeled a "story" - such as above - does not have to tell a "story"? This seems to be the In Thing in the New NEW WORLDS, and is a sheer waste of paper. - RLC **)

Bernie's mind works faster than mine ::: my past slides into the present in years-long slabs, and I never recognize the joins. Bernie's mind sounds exciting. I wish I could get excited about it.

I'm not sure what Gary was objecting to re. the Foyster piece. It was incredibly entertaining - and I still think that Gary, by ignorance, steals his punchlines, or makes up "new" punchlines that have been used umpteen times before. Gary hasn't read those umpteen stories. As I said before, the safest thing these days, is to blatantly choose an old punchline, add a variation of your own, and then add something really original, like the English language, or characterization.

My back cover fell off too - my MENTOR back cover and my SFC back cover. Tough. You mentioned SFC and I've plugged THE MENTOR, so who cares.

- Bruce Gillespie.

Don't worry about getting a job with Private Enterprise :
Join the Commonwealth Public Service and LIVE!

John Foyster
12 Glengariff Drive, Mulgrave, Vic. 3170.

Dear Ron,

Bruce Gillespie's piece on Linebarger is interesting, but incorrect in several places. The truth or otherwise of Burns's suggestion concerning Linebarger's stories as 'legendary cycles of the future' has nothing to do with whether a chronological order of the stories exists. The fact that Bruce considers ALPHA RALPHA BOULEVARD as the earliest story indicates that he simply hasn't read enough : ANGEHELM, THE BURNING OF THE BRAIN, NO NO NOT ROGOV and SCANNERS LIVE IN VAIN all occur before this (and there are others as well, but lets settle for four at the moment). The only reason I haven't bothered to list Smith's stories in sequence is that it doesn't particularly matter.

Professor Burns is also slightly inaccurate in suggesting that (Cordwainer Smith) "wasn't a systematic thinker". In fact, it was his relentless systemization of his thought and his fiction which has given it its sharpness and light.

Bruce then says he will refute some of my judgements (as made in ASFR 11). Firstly he challenges my suggestion that Smith's work does not need exposition. But he does not support this challenge : he argues that readers want to have Smith explained to them. This is an entirely different matter, and what Joe Phan wants done with what Smith wrote is not necessarily what Smith's work needs. I stand by my original suggestion.

Bruce goes further and challenges my assertion that the stories are entirely modern. The acrostics and stuff are just games, of course, though it should be noted that Linebarger himself believed that even the smallest matter was, or could be, of great importance. On the other hand, I am now almost prepared to assert that in fact Linebarger wrote entirely about our modern world in his fiction. To give a more complex example than simple acrostics but without going too far, it is fairly clear that QUEST OF THE THREE WORLDS was Linebarger's fictionalized version of events in the Middle East at the time of writing. The similarities are remarkably close. But this is by no means the entire point. The atmosphere, the 'allegorical interpretation' (as Bruce puts it) all reek of our modern world : why fight it?

I'm not able to follow Bruce on his remarks at the bottom of page 10. He refers to a para in which I refer to "imagination, his style, etc.". This I can locate. He indicates that in the previous para I claim that "SCANNERS LIVE IN VAIN makes the literary grade because it first started a trend in 1948...etc.etc.". This I cannot locate. The previous paragraph reads, in full :

"Cordwainer Smith was the first writer to write science fiction which could possibly be accepted as "Literature"." end of paragraph, page 9 of ASFR 11.

So I can't find the statement I'm supposed to have made,

and will have to let things stand as they are, at least until Bruce gets his quotations right. On the other hand, I wonder just which other "new writers..injected genuine literary quality into the sf of the 'fifties'?"

I'm a little lost when Bruce comes to attack my feelings about characterisation in Linebarger's fiction, for he doesn't seem ever to be sufficiently specific. However the description of Casher O'Neill as "the cypher-like eternal survivor" is remarkably appropriate, for Casher O'Neill is Linebarger's symbol, sign or figure for Eternal Egypt...

The remainder of Bruce's article is an excellent exposition of some points concerning Linebarger's fiction. In particular his characterization of THE CRIME AND GLORY OF COMMANDER SUZDAL as "little more than a tract against such distorted unnaturalness that mankind may come to assume in his dealings with his universe" is very apt. The city of Suzdal (in the USSR) was the place to which Czar Vasili III confined his wife Solomonina after she had failed to produce any children : he took a new wife, and Ivan the Terrible was the product of this union. Linebarger's fictionalisation of this is extremely careful, don't you think?

I am not convinced that "Cordwainer Smith (chose) not to make his universe easy to read", which is Bruce's claim on page 16. Certainly Smith's work is very rich, but really, anything which yields its all first-up must be fairly shallow. It was because Linebarger/Smith has so much embedded in his fiction that my article in ASFR 11 was intended as no more than the merest scraping across the surface.

Your name as a faker with funny pseudonyms is certainly not unjustified, but I can't help feeling that this 'David Gray' stuff has gone beyond a joke. The image you put across of a gray little man is very skillful, it is true, and the satirical image of a clapped out mind finely drawn, but some readers may not be aware of your deception. By putting such appalling arguments for some occasionally reasonable viewpoints you do a dis-favour to the spirit of intelligent discourse. I'd suggest that you only write that foolish Campbell stuff under the 'Gray' pseudonym, where it can't do any harm.

I amplified the points made in SCIENCE FICTION VERSUS LIFE at the recent convention. Bruce's contention that the rest of the world tries to get away from the real world isn't an adequate answer, and it certainly isn't adequate to people who care about the world as it is, and Andrew Sarris is one of those people. "You're another", though popular as a form of argument, is never a justification.

Gary Woodman, on the other hand, seems to have read another article with a similar title...

Number 15 was a bit of a let-down, I thought : that stuff by 'Ron Clarke', for instance. No, I'm not complaining about its publication, just that it took up so much space in the

issue.

The NEBULA AWARDS results, as several people have remarked, were sick-making. I can picture the Milford Mafia standing in a circle and handing awards to each other.

On the other hand, you do have a genuine contribution from Graham Stone : and it seems you actually got money out of him - congratulations. When I get a letter from Bernie Bernhouse I always think it is just his hand-writing that makes him seem incoherent : this published letter gives the lie to that theory.

If I were you, Ron, I'd sign up Gary Woodman to write a story containing a character for whom "fix the spavined aarvark" was a suitable expression - forget these blokes who say "fix the bastard". Gary's remark that he has his ear "(both, if it comes to that) to the ground at Monash" is quite accurate. The other animal which has this ability is the ostrich.

I hope you can struggle out with another issue, Ron, even if this letter isn't of much assistance. I'm afraid I'm not doing much writing at the moment. We are half-thinking of turning up for the Syncon, but there are some logistic problems of considerable magnitude which have to be solved first.

- John Foyster.

SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS FIND 'A NEW PLANET'.

Robin Johnson.

Brian Aldiss reports in the London Observer (6/4/69) on the S.F. symposium held as a sideshow to the Rio de Janeiro Film Festival. Euphoria ran rampant among the many well-known writers, perhaps because of the fact that the Brazilian Government paid the tab (try that on Canberra).

Feuds were forgotten, or at least patched over, as SF was lauded by Fred Pohl as "the world's strongest stronghold of free speech", by J.G. Ballard as "the greatest, the only literature of the twentieth century".

The festival seems to have been a success with the public as well as the writers. Robert Sheckley made a hit on local radio & TV, and as the author of the story of one of the films in the festival, The Tenth Victim. Arthur C. Clarke was honoured with a 'Black Monolith' for 2001, also shown.

This film now has earned more money than any other MGM epic except Gone With The Wind, Ben Hur & Dr Zhivago, which proves the contention widely expressed here that the publicity & marketing were all wrong in this country. Other films shown included three by George Pal, who also was present.

This wingding seems to prove that when SF is treated as a respectable

and exciting branch of writing and not a ghetto, and as a branch that no longer needs to fight tooth and claw to prove its respectability, it achieves that status - at least in Brazil.

- Robin Johnson.

—ooOoo—

BREVIEWS BY ALEX ROBB:

The Dragon in the Sea

Frank Herbert (Penguin).

Having read a mere three books by this writer I now consider myself an embryonic Frank Herbert fan, hence this review of one of his earlier (1956) efforts. The bitter salt crusted residue left in the minds of those of you unfortunate enough to have read my ecstatic/incoherent review of Dune in THE MENTOR 13, will now I trust be washed away by the scintillating brilliance of this present review...

Dragon in the Sea was presumably written for the US magazine-pulp market but is no mean work by any standards, a suspense thriller compared to the works of C.S. Forester by no less an authority than the Times Literary Supplement, whether justly or otherwise I cannot say. On second thoughts, I doubt very much if this was written for the pulps, but I do know that this quite brief book has succeeded in keeping me on tenterhooks from one end to the other with its terse, short sentences, dialogue and the occasional bit of stream-of-consciousness helping to give it a distinctive flavour, that of an action novel. I say that the novel is active because that is the main impression that it leaves in my mind, that and also of background which although less heavy and 'world-encompassing' than that of Dune is drawn with a masterly hand. Each page bears a measured attention to detail as its trademark, detail which could only come from a man as thoroughly conversant with his topic as Herbert is. A knowledge of submarines, of things marine and of the psychologic, have not only allowed for a high degree of scientific realism but also form an integral part of the whole work.

In passing let me note a significant undercurrent, in which the author is suggesting that the Psychologist has come to be cast in the role of "Father Confessor" to our society, as the omniscient and distant being who sees all and knows all... Psychology comes in the eyes of the psychologist-protagonist of the novel to be seen as a science and nothing more, not a religion or even an enlightened substitute for one. Thus the way is open for him to say that beliefs can form a unique common bond between people (rather than a neurotic illusion) of immense value under battle (= stress) conditions. To my mind this faintly theologic current enriches the book whether or not you consider its thesis valid.

Characterization would seem to be less strong than in

Dune, at any rate I am less emotionally identified with the characters than caught up by the action, and the jargonization which spoilt The Eyes of Heisenburg (his latest here) is mercifully absent. As regards to this latter, feverish years of reading science fiction have not prepared me for such vast complexity.

Now I have managed to spend near 600 words on a novel without any mention of its plot, so rather than make this review go on forever, a brief rundown will have to do: Ensign Ramsey, psychologist and electronic expert extraordinaire, is roped in by his superiors as the fourth member of the crew of a Hell Diver class sub tug which has the mission of tapping vast reservoirs of enemy-held oil, this oil being situated in underwater deposits off Norway. Twenty other subs have been out on this same kind of mission and each has failed to return, with the result that morale is at an all-time low. Sabotage is feared, and Ramsey is instructed to keep a special check on the Captain who has been diagnosed as a potential psychotic. Ramsey soon proves his worth in battle and his quick-thinking saves their lives more than once, but all four characters have their fair share of this; and you can be sure that together they manage to pirate the oil for the greedy old US of A.

I bought my copy secondhand at Ashwoods, Sydney, it has a very attractive cover and a bargain at just 30¢. I reckon it's worth far more than that.

o o o o

The 7th Galaxy Reader

Ed. Frederick Pohl (Pan).

Have a look at the dust-jacket and you'll see as impressive a list of names as any fan could wish. Robert Bloch, Ray Bradbury, Zenna Henderson, Fritz Leiber they're all there... in some of the worst stories they ever wrote. It may be strange that a star authorial lineup should come up with such mediocre fare but that is exactly what's happened.

I mention this book in order to do a demolition job, because I see there are still a few 80¢ copies floating around. I don't want you to join me in wasting your precious money. Apart from a gruesome tale of alien conquest by Algis Budrys, and a singularly crazy-mad story by Margaret St. Claire (An Old-Fashioned Bird Christmas) this whole thing is not worth the paper it is written on. "A memorable anthology", says the Yorkshire Post, to which I must simply reply, "Memorable of what?"

- Alexander Robb.

—ooOoo—
R E A D E O S
—ooOoo—

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A directory for clubs and organisations is Sydney. Edited by:-
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S E R I O U S .

by
Michael Black

My name is Rover. Rover H. Boy.

I am a private nose.

Woofday at brekytime I received my first job. It was in my dish, scrawled on the back of a man biscuit label. There was only one word. Albert.

This would be by toughest assignment.

I kn w of this Albert. A fine upstanding Labrador who had fallen foul of a deranged though brilliant wolfhound neurosurgeon. This quack had successfully transplanted the pup's brain into a human. Although it's only a rumour, I heard that men thought the results were such a good joke as to have published a book about the whole affair. Some creatures have a distorted sense of reality.

But back to the coalpits. The message had been even more terse than the boss had been previously. I needed more to put me on the scent.

I trotted down to the square and joined the boys at the trough. Paddy was there, whiskers wet through as usual, a glugged glass in his eyes.

"Pad", I said, "Paddy my boy, its been too long since we shared a trough. There's a bone or two with your name on them at my digs you know."

"Don't take it on man. This Albert's a cool cat." Paddy was a strange one. Quiet. Kept too much to himself.

"I'll bear that in mind. Thanks anyway Pad, the offer's open anytime. You know where my kennel is". I knew this was all I'd get here. Once out of sight of the trough I ran across town to the Meat Hall, a sleezy eatery in a dugout. This was where the dachshund Mietze howled at night. She was lying in one of the corners of the place, enjoying the sun. I walked over, cutting off the beam of light from the entrance. She rolled onto her paws and glared at me.

"Cut out Rover. Go after Albert, for all I care."

"What's this Albert Kick? I don't dig it nohow."

"That cat's really flipped. Lost what marbles the vet left him."

"But why the urgency. What's doing?"

"You're the nose. Go see Randy if you don't know."

She rolled onto her back in the patch of sunlight beside my shadow, closed her eyes and began to snore quietly. Randy was my only lead so I trotted down the street to where he was lying.

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FUTURIAN SOCIETY OF SYDNEY

I have heard nothing more about this club, so I take it that it is not active anymore.

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

Inquires contact Alex Robb Phone 88-3785.
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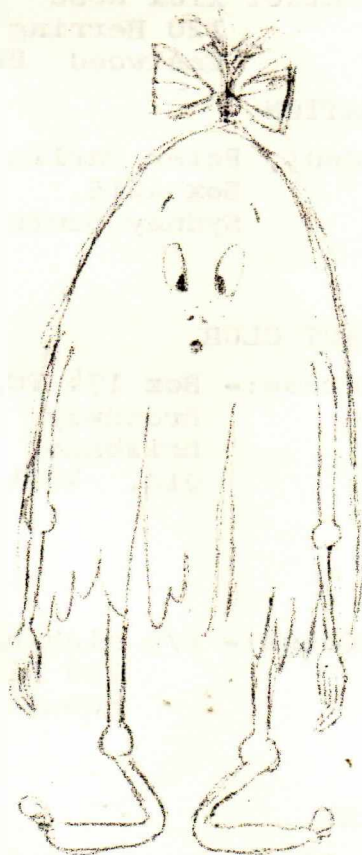
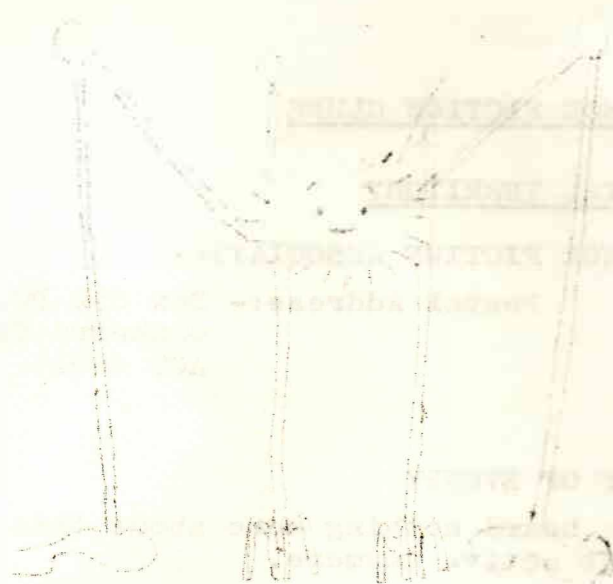
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C O R R E C T I O N .

To TM 16.

As you will have seen by now, the artwork acknowledgements do not tie up with the artwork. The front-cover photograph is of Patrick A. M. Perry, taken by John Dowden (Sydney's answer to Lee Harding). The artwork on the back-cover is Dimitri Razuvaev's The Warrior. His other artwork mentioned (The Earl Demonic, Derlic of the Burning Gaze) should be, I hope, gracing the cover of the next issue of TM/EOS, in which will be the letters of comment on TM 16, two stories by Jack Wodhams, one story by Gary Woodman (his best-to-date) and other interesting material.

The only people who will receive this next issue will be those subscribers to TM who still have subs running, those with letters of comment on TM 16, and those with contributions in that issue of TM/EOS.

- Ron L Clarke.

