

# Science-Fiction Advertiser



20c January 1953

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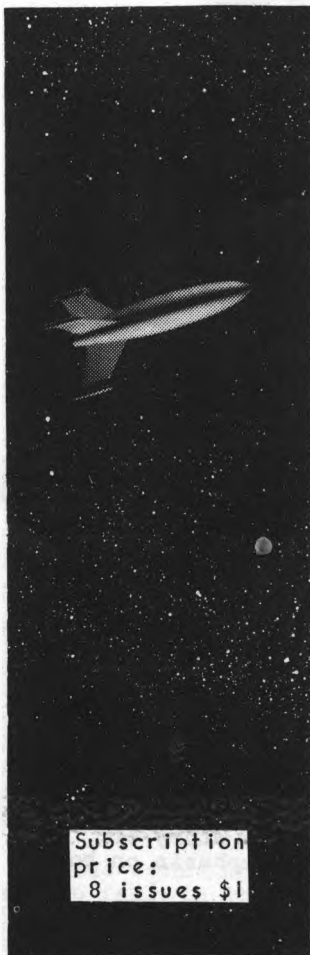
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Subscription  
price:  
8 issues \$1

## Science Fiction Advertiser

is published at

1745 Kenneth Road, Glendale 1, Calif.

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# SCIENCE



*IN*

# FICTION

by

Henry Kuttner

In the November issue of Science Fiction Advertiser the editor poses a question very much worth investigation. With reference to John Campbell's guess that the average new science fiction author is "a man between twenty and thirty-five, a professional technologist or student technologist of one kind or another, and he writes science-fiction to express his ideas, not for a living," the editor says: -

Do you think a case might be made from that definition of the "average new s-f author" to account for the lack of sympathy toward science fiction that is generally found among "literary" people? Naturally, new writers whose backgrounds are technical are not often going to produce anything of high literary quality -- inclination and available time would have precluded their mastering that field. And conversely, the literary man has specialized in his field to an equal exclusion of technical matters -- which might render improbable his appreciation for (and understanding of?) the ideas the technologists think interesting enough to try to make a story of. Is a high calibre of science-fiction, with emphasis on both the terms, probable?

Well, this brings up some intriguing aspects. I don't think there can be any one-to-one correlation of science with fiction in any single construct. Genetically, it's impossible to breed a human with a horse. The offspring can only be mythological, and many of the attempts to breed from a mating of science and fiction have similarly resulted in something with a man's head and a horse's arse. The goals of science and of fiction may perhaps be dissimilar, but what they do have in common is the fact that each is based upon a methodology. I think we can safely assume that the scientific method is a prerequisite for any sort of significant experiment in the physical, social, or biological sciences.

Literature has its methods too.

They vary in their

Henry Kuttner is one half of a writing team including C(atherine). L. Moore, who is Mrs. Kuttner. Since their marriage in 1940, virtually everything either has written has been in collaboration with the other. There's a local legend to the effect that they can exchange places at two typewriters without missing a stroke.

Their recent books include Man Drowning (by Henry Kuttner, Harper), Robots Have No Tails (by Lewis Padgett, Gnome), and Judgment Night (by C. L. Moore -- and including stories published in magazines under the by-line of Lawrence O'Donnell -- Gnome).

Whether the present article was written by Mr. or Mrs. or both, you and I will probably never know. But that is of small significance, for that which is said here is no lone viewpoint; rather, I'm reasonably certain, the author speaks for virtually the entire profession.

application, just as a story may vary in its purpose -- in the ideas it expresses, and so forth. Take the detective story. This, by and large, uses the method of formal detection, often expressed in the social machinery of the Homicide Bureau or the private eye, as part of the content of the story. But it has nothing to do with the method of fiction itself. That is a matter of form -- very simply, of writing a story.

The detective story is as old as Oedipus and Orestes -- older, for you can find it in Homer. Crime and Punishment is a detective story. So is The Canary Murder Case. And so are many of the "time-table" mysteries in which the emphasis is almost exclusively upon the methodology of detection, problem-solving according to certain principles of deduction and induction. In the latter stories, there is usually little attention paid to the method of fiction. But in James' Beast in the Jungle, also in some sense a detective story, the fictional element is vitally important.

The technologist who writes fiction about science is apt to fall in the same group that contains the writers of "time-table" mysteries. Campbell suggests that this hypothetical technologist writes to express his ideas. There's the gimmick: his ideas about what? and expressed with what purpose?

Since the ideas are told in fictional form, rather than expository, we'll have to assume that such stories will involve characters moving and interacting in an environment. (I exclude tours de force like Fearn's Mathematica and Mathematica Plus, though even here Fearn by the nature of his fictional form was forced to personify his abstractions.) These characters may be merely symbols, as is the case in the "time-table" whodunits, and, similarly, plot and theme may be unimportant pegs on which to hang the particular idea or ideas.

However, even when the idea is simply a practical application of the Mobius Strip (a concept used recently), characters have to act out the problem, and it should matter to the reader whether the problem is solved or not. The reader may be interested exclusively in the problem itself, or he may identify with the characters, or both. But the readers interested only in problem-solving as such are probably not very numerous. Indeed, I'm not sure these read science-fiction; they probably read scientific texts. At any rate, there is obviously some element in science-fiction which is intensely satisfying to many.

Possibly it is the same element we find in daydreams -- channelized into scientific areas because our civilization today is a scientific one, and we believe in science where we once believed in magic. The "idea" may (as in the Gothic novel) be the creation of a Frankenstein's monster, or it may (in the whodunit) be some variation of the locked-room puzzle. It may be parallel time-tracks of the hypothesis that a fire won't burn in a weightless spaceship. These are ideas, certainly. But to whom are they important?

We can assume that they are important to our hypothetical technologist, but, again, why? Well, he is a technologist. Posing and solving such problems are directly related to his personality and role. So the same problems would be of somewhat equal interest to those who possess similar personalities and fill similar roles.

But Frankenstein, Brave New World, and The Time Machine have had reasonably wide appeal. There are reasons for this; one is the fact that these novels possessed much more than ideas. They had elements in them which appealed to many readers who skipped the "science" in the stories. What were these elements which presumably were important to the average reader?

For one thing, the stories aroused emotion, an element related to characterization. For another, they created suspense -- related to plot. And the scientific ideas were directly related to the theme -- which is usually expressive of a philosophy and a value-judgment.

Finally, all these elements were expressed with a certain degree of skill in the literary methodology -- the techniques of fiction itself.

Now I must admit that all this is not really necessary if the technologist-writer wants to express his ideas only to a small and selected group. I also suggest that he damn well better not try to write for a living -- unless he perfects his literary skills, for fiction is the operative term in science-fiction. "Science" deals with part of the content; fiction deals with the form.

It would be nonsensical for a fiction writer, no matter how skilful, to feel that his background was sufficient to let him be a top-flight chemist or physicist. But it is popularly assumed that it takes training to practice in the

sciences efficiently, and it's also assumed that anybody can write a story efficiently. Anybody can write a story, yes, but a man who re-wires a lamp isn't a physicist. Fermi would have a certain lack of sympathy for that man's pretensions, just as "literary" people (i.e., those who are familiar with the theory and practice of literature) lack sympathy for most science-fiction. Not all -- but that brings up the definition of science-fiction, and we're right back at the detective story.

The reader who admires only "time-table" mysteries will not consider Crime and Punishment a genuine detective story, by his standards. He'd say there are too many irrelevant elements. But irrelevant to whom -- and relevant to whom? Certainly Dostoevsky's novel contains a great deal that is relevant to a great many people.

Because of that, it transcends the definitions of the detective story and becomes literature of high quality. Similarly, science-fiction that can be called literature must transcend the definitions of science-fiction, and it can do that chiefly by recognizing that it is fiction, and traces back even more to Aristotle's Poetics than, say, to De Anima.

But exactly what is the function of the science in a science-fiction story? The same question might be asked concerning the detective story. It all depends. Dashiell Hammett was a Pinkerton operative, but I don't recall that Dostoevsky ever wore a badge. It is a matter of what emphasis is desired in the story, what the author's intention is, and primarily what science means to him.

Is it an enemy? Is it a way of life or a means of escape? Is it a job? Does he consider the effects of a matter-transmitter in economic terms, or physical, or psychological, or emotional? The way a writer looks at the significant elements in his story is often the way he looks at life. Whether or not this way is meaningful to few or to many is one factor, and whether or not the author has the literary skill to convey his meaning is another.

Scientific expository writing can examine fiction -- the method of approach may be biological, psychological, even astronomical. In such a case, the fiction forms part of the content; the form -- the method -- is scientific. Fiction can certainly examine science, too, but it should do so in the opposite way, since in a fiction story science, as I have mentioned, is a matter of content and not of fictional form.

So, in my no doubt biased opinion, a high calibre of science-fiction, with emphasis on both the terms, is possible. But each term requires a different quality of emphasis, and the result, ideally, would transcend the various definitions of science-fiction and move into an area where only the definitions of literature could apply.

And I think such stories will continue to be written.

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FALL-WINTER, 1952

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Cover Drawing by JERRI BULLOCK (see page 39).

FANTASTIC WORLDS is published, allegedly, at intervals approx-  
imating three months, at 1942 Telegraph Avenue, Stockton, Califor-  
nia. Subscription \$1.00 (four issues); 25¢ the copy. Copyright  
1952, by Edward W. Ludwig. All stories appearing in this magazine  
are fiction. Any similarity to actual beings--with the exception  
of demons and extra-terrestrials--is coincidental.

# B o o k s

Science-Fiction and  
S-F Non-Fiction



LIMBO by Bernard Wolfe. Random House. 438 p., \$3.50.

This novel demands critical attention, and it would seem to be receiving it. Philip Wiley, writing in the N.Y. Herald-Tribune, doesn't like it. Anthony Boucher (I think; it might be McComas), in *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, calls it a "pretentious hodgepodge" written by a "fashionable literary cultist". "Style, bulk, and publisher's promotion", he goes on to say, "will cause this gallimaufry to be taken seriously by critics who wouldn't even open a book by Robert A. Heinlein; you readers who know what science fiction is and can be should at least look at it, so that you may, like Anderson's (sic) observant child, proclaim to the credulous that the Emperor is naked." Harvey Curtis Webster, in *Saturday Review*, writes of the "tremendous intellectual stimulation this fine novel communicates." Mr. Webster sneers at science fiction and "technological 'progress'", and, obviously unfamiliar with the November 1951 *Galaxy* story, "Self Portrait" (a tale, by a man named Bernard Wolfe, in which is implicit much of the philosophy more fully developed in the present work) points out this novel's superiority to "the pulp tales that dramatize supermen with supermachines". All three agree that Limbo contains "undigested" ideas.

Now it should be virtually axiomatic that, in a case of such disagreement, with Wiley and Boucher lined up against a science fictionally illiterate critic, you and I would side with Masters W and B. Perhaps you will, but in this case I -- not, be it admitted, without a puzzled feeling of guilt -- find myself allied with Mr. Webster.

And that is not easily explained, even to myself. However, I can't deny the fact of my enthusiasm for Limbo that had survived several weeks before the appearance of any re-

views of the book.

Limbo is the story of an army brain surgeon who deserted during the War of 1972. For the next eighteen years he lived on an uncharted island with a people patterned after the Zuni American Indians. These people for centuries had practiced a crude lobotomy on all their members who exhibited any aggressive tendencies. Failing to dissuade them from this often fatal practice, Dr. Martine (who had arrived with a well-equipped hospital plane) taught the natives scientific surgery.

Leaving this primitive culture that has found one effective means of preventing war, Dr. Martine returns to civilization to find another such means in operation: literal disarmament as well as disligament. The more religious-minded of the amputees live the contemplative life, in baskets. But most of the others, having satisfied their innate masochistic tendencies (which, says Wolfe, are war's chief cause), see nothing paradoxical in replacing their limbs with greatly superior prosthetics.

The "Pro-Pros" are a cult, with all the usual connotations. And their god, their bible? Martine -- and the notebook he kept during the war; a notebook in which, prior to his abandoning the society he'd lost patience with, he had with heavy satire outlined the only way of ending war that would be possible for an aggressively masochistic mankind.

Mr. Webster deserves no answer to his snidery in re a branch of writing of which he knows, or understands, little; nor, as connoisseurs of science fiction, are we much interested in what he has to say of a story that, most definitely, is science fiction.

But Tony Boucher's disapproval warrants consideration. He disapproves of the apparent influence of "every modernly modish writer from Laurence Sterne to Jean Paul Sartre" and says that the dominant influence is James Joyce. But is it condemnation of a book to say that it's neither so good as Joyce nor similar to Heinlein? I, for one, am pleased to find a writer of science fiction who displays acquaintance with a wide variety of respectable writers by whom almost all s-f writers seem completely uninfluenced.

As best I can tell, Boucher is displeased because this is neither the best science fiction nor the best literary work he's read. If I'm right about that, then, so far, he and I agree. But I think that Limbo is top drawer science fiction. I think it is exceptionally well-constructed s-f; I think it is a successful compound of one of the widest varieties of components appropriate to science fiction that any s-f story ever had. And I do not think we should be overly critical of a moderately skilled literary style in a field ordinarily completely devoid of any.

Assuredly, the Emperor has changed his dress; but he is adequately, tastefully clothed.

George D. Martindale

WHEN AND IF by Philip Reynolds. William Sloane Associates, translated from the French, 246 p., \$3.00.

This is a narrative of the coming war with Russia. The author was an intelligence officer in the R.A.F. during W.W. II, and here he has rewritten that war with a few parallel substitutions of events. As an account of the workings of espionage agents during the kind of war we're familiar with it's good -- merely good -- but it's my opinion that a war beginning tomorrow would show the author to have lacked simple information about the weapons that have already been produced and to have been grossly deficient in imagination. This is all the less excusable for the story's being greatly a news-type summary of the overall war (the author is a newsman). Reynolds doesn't neglect to say that the next war will be somewhat different in kind from the rest: he says it won't be. Oh, there is an exchange of atomic bombing in the war's last stages (and this is perhaps the most unrealistic sequence in the book), but the story would have been no different had it been block-busters instead. A disappointing story to come from a publisher who authored To Walk the Night.

George D. Martindale

MAN, THE CHEMICAL MACHINE by Ernest Borek. Columbia University Press; 219 p., \$3.00.

A first book in biochemistry. The level of understanding assumed is approximately that of Scientific American magazine, although the number of homely analogies and picture words included suggests an assumption of less native scientific curiosity in the reader. No harm in that, of course.

Between an introductory chapter and a terminating credo are chapters on enzymes, vitamins, sugars, isotopes (ss tracers), amino acids and proteins, blood, cell defense, genes, and the brain.

In his preface, the author states: "As far as I know there has not appeared as yet a connected story showing the biochemist at his bench, tracing the growth of the ideas that guide his hands and unfolding his view on the mechanism of the living machine. It is such a story of my field that I tried to tell in this book. Therefore I set out to emphasize not the final clinical applications of the biochemist's efforts but rather the accumulation of ideas, bold deductions, and sometimes, fruitful accidents which led to those medical bounties."

Readers of this book who have previously been acquainted with its subject only through the press will probably be surprised to learn how much of the scientific achievement that is applied by practitioners in the medical profession is actually the work, not of "the doctors" but of the chemists. Such readers will no longer be particularly impressed by the information that Pasteur had not the M.D. degree.

As I have said, this is a "first book" in biochemistry, and a good one. Who can suggest a "second book"?

Les Holbrook  
-12-

THE LEGION OF TIME by Jack Williamson. Fantasy Press.  
252 p., \$3.00.

The title story is from 1938 issues of Astounding Stories. Also in the volume is "After World's End" from a 1939 Marvel Stories.

The protagonist of "The Legion of Time" is the leader of a band of adventurers who travel along various possible future time tracks. They find two far futures, one much more to be desired than the other, and do what they can to increase the probability of the one -- for only one can be the future actually to occur.

"After World's End" carries the first traveler of interplanetary space into the far future, to an Earth ruled by robots. There he finds that he is a legend; that he is expected to free humanity.

Both are yarns of high adventure of a sort that was very popular at the time of their magazine publication, a sort that one seldom finds done so well today. It is for such yarns as these that one best remembers the magazines of the thirties. If you weren't reading s-f then, try this; you may find you have missed something worth seeking out.

Malcolm Marquardt

THE STARMEN by Leigh Brackett. Gnome, 213 p., \$2.75.  
CURRENTS OF SPACE by Isaac Asimov. Doubleday, 217 p., \$2.75.

I suppose I'll always have trouble deciding whether or not a given story is science fiction. At any rate, until I can satisfy myself that I can define it, I intend to exercise great caution in saying that readers have been defrauded by a science fiction label.

These two novels include the elements of interstellar flight and extraterrestrial life. Certainly science will be a partner in accomplishing the former; and science does not deny the existence of the other. The flights are accomplished in ships, not on the backs of birds; and the ships have reaction engines, not chain-drive paddle-wheels. Given these elements that science fiction already has, with the sanction of science, explained, what follows is the flesh of adventure covering the skeleton of acceptable science fiction framework. Such literary methodology has provided some of our best reading entertainment and I do not intend here -- or anywhere -- to quarrel with it.

THE STARMEN has been expanded from the author's "Starmen of Llyrdis" from a 1951 Startling Stories. The people of Llyrdis are an artificially created mutation, whereby they are the galaxy's only race capable of withstanding the acceleration required for practical interstellar flight. An Earthman, hybrid son of a human mother and Llyrdis-born father, takes the risk of having inherited the father's mutant qualities.

The trip to Llyrdis proves that he had. Once there, he

becomes embroiled in the local politics and is instrumental in fulfilling the dream of the radical party.

CURRENTS OF SPACE is apparently unchanged from its serialized version in 1952 Astoundings. The story fits in the same framework as "Tyrann" (Galaxy; The Stars, Like Dust is the Doubleday book title).

The protagonist, bearing to a planet information of its coming doom from astronomical causes, is "psycho-probed" into a complete, though impermanent, loss of memory. For economic reasons (all humanoid races seem remarkably alike) his information is suppressed -- the population of the planet is to be a sacrifice to the bank accounts of its (absentee, of course) owners. Political connivery is rampant in this one, too.

Neither book makes much pretense at originality of theme or handling. They are capably written, entertaining adventures; if you ask no more of them, you'll enjoy them.

Jud Marshall

PRISONER IN THE SKULL by Charles Dye. Abelard, 256 p, \$2.50.

This is a suspense story of the future, with all the trimmings. The author doesn't miss a chance to remind the reader that the scene of the story is an advanced culture. Gadgets and strange names abound. And the plot is complex, ingenious, and satisfying. But, as I said, it's a suspense-mystery in a future setting; not science fiction. Incidentally, Abelard's warehouse burned down, with great loss to their stock. This book in its first state might be scarce!

Jack Kelsey

IN THE NAME OF SCIENCE by Martin Gardner. Putnam, 320 p., \$4.

The dust jacket labels this one a "survey of the high priests and cultists of science, past and present." It is as broad a survey of its field as I've read.

I suspect that many of the "high priests" discussed in this volume number some readers of the Advertiser among their followers. As a matter of fact, I can't fully believe that the matter of the so-called "flying saucers" has been as thoroughly settled as Mr. Gardner assumes. Among the twenty-five chapters are ones discussing Fort, Korzybski, Hubbard, Lysenko, Velikovsky, and Roger Babson; flat and hollow earth theories, Atlantis, Lemuria, Great Pyramid, ESP, dowsing, and handwriting theories; and several others.

One gets the impression, when considering that this one volume was the sole end in view, that the author was unusually thorough in his research. Perhaps the study of such things is a hobby with him.

On the whole, the writing is notably dispassionate, and Gardner's fairness in presenting the case for each of the "high priests's" theories should impress all who read the book, with the probable exceptions of actual proponents of the theories discussed.

John Elstrom

CITY by Clifford D. Simak. Gnome Press, 1952; 224 p., \$2.75.

Readers of Astounding during the 1944-1947 years probably remember with a certain affection Simak's stories of the Webster family, their robot Jenkins, and their dogs. And they will welcome, as I did, the appearance of this book which collects all the stories of the series.

The stories are individual details of a vast panorama. The scope covers several thousand years in time, with excursions in space to Jupiter...and to alien dimensions.

One of the Websters developed a mutation -- a talking dog. In time mankind disappeared from Earth, but the dogs remained and developed a civilization in cooperation with the robots that Man had also left. And the last episode suggests that Dog, too, will have a successor.



A large part of the book's appeal lies in the notes that were written especially for this volume to tie together the separate episodes. Written by a scholar of the far future -- far, even, from the time of the last story -- they present interpretations of the stories by several authorities -- all dogs, of course -- and it is an interesting point to note that in cases of disagreement the writing scholar is in error, and another, Tige, who apparently is not held in high regard by his colleagues, is in most cases nearly correct. But, of course, one could hardly expect an intelligent Dog millenia and dimensions removed from the world of Man, to believe that Man actually had existed and was master of Dog.

Jud Marshall

THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION STORIES: 1952, the 4th annual short story collection by those venerable old editors, Bleiler and Dikty. Fell, 1952, 288 p., \$2.95.

This book reached me with a terse note from SFA's editor reading, "Omission of Astounding 'sa decision most confounding. Explain." I agree with him that that is a matter that might reveal some interesting points in its investigation, and though I have been kicking around one or two approaches to it, I'm not yet prepared to go into print with my ideas nor do I think it could be done within the space limitations of a review.

The first "Best" anthology (1949) drew half of its 12 selections from Astounding; 1950, 3 of 13; 1951 only 2 of the total 18; and this 1952 collection presents 18 stories, none of which are from Astounding. Now, I'm an Astounding man. It's my favorite of the magazines. And although I am a technologist, I do not understand the basis for the frequently heard charge that Astounding is not comprehensible to those who aren't technologists. I have read somewhere that its vocabulary is third highest of all periodicals in the country -- but the two that exceeded it, Time Magazine



and The New York Times (a newspaper, of all things!) seem to appeal to respectably large numbers of the populace. (Can anyone confirm this report, and give its source? Editor)

But my assignment is to help you decide whether or not you'll enjoy reading this book. Well, Astounding-ophile tho I am, I approve of the majority of the editors' choices. I commend the book to the attention of each of you who didn't read in 1951 (a) Galaxy Science Fiction, (b) Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, or (c) Super Science Stories, Marvel Science Stories, Worlds Beyond, and Startling Stories.

And I still think the one significant omission deserves attention. The editors' introductions are fascinating contributions to the literature of science fiction analysis, but they do not have implicit within them the answer to the query that opened this piece.

1951's "best" were: Kubilius, "The Other Side"; Bester, "Of Time and Third Avenue"; Kornbluth, "The Marching Morons"; Curtis, "A Peculiar People"; Grinnell, "Extending the Holdings"; Tucker, "The Tourist Trade"; Temple, "The Two Shadows"; Christopher, "Balance"; Seabright, "Brightness Falls From the Air"; Matheson, "Witch War"; Phillips, "At No Extra Cost"; Boucher, "Nine-Finger Jack"; Leiber, "Appointment in Tomorrow"; Porges, "The Rats"; Vance, "Men of the Ten Books"; Reynolds and Brown, "Dark Interlude"; and Bradbury, "The Pedestrian".

John Elstrom

MISTS OF DAWN by Chad Oliver. Winston, 208 p., \$2.00.

ISLANDS IN THE SKY by Arthur C. Clarke. Wins., 209 p., \$2.

Here an anthropologist and a rocketeer have written for teen-agers books respectively about prehistoric man and satellite stations. I can't with the assurance of knowledge write of the qualifications of the men who wrote the "science fiction" I read at age circa 15, but I'm convinced they had not the qualifications of Oliver and Clarke.

The protagonist of MISTS OF DAWN is inadvertently transported to circa 48,000 B.C. His capture by Neanderthal men and escape, his meeting with Cro-Magnon and acceptance by them into their culture held my interest and should thoroughly capture the imaginations of readers of lesser age.

Clarke's action is more restrained (though Oliver's is well within credibility's bounds too). In a contest his protagonist wins a trip "to any part of the earth". A legal technicality sustains his choice of a trip to Inner Station.

Satellite station life is depicted with thoughtful conviction. Have you ever thought, for example, of the utility in free fall of a spring-loaded, telescoping staff? You poke it against a bulkhead, shove off with the energy of the spring, and cushion to a stop against the same collapsing broom-stick. Clarke isn't telling us here how locomotion might be facilitated; he's telling us how it will.

If Clarke's and Ley's non-fiction haven't yet interested the youngsters in your family, start them on this; they'll be exposed to almost as much information -- and perhaps learn more!

RAS

BEYOND HUMAN KEN edited by Judith Merrill. Random House, 334 p., \$2.95.  
OMNIBUS OF SCIENCE FICTION edited by Groff Conklin. Crown, 562 pp., \$3.50.

Both editors have made their selections from a variety of sources, principally the science fiction magazines. With OMNIBUS Conklin in no way endangers the reputation he has enjoyed since the publication of his first anthology in 1946. His plan was wide variety of good stories. Miss Merrill has selected stories offering "as many different, and differing, concepts of 'other life' as could be found"...excepting only "the standard brand...BEM". In his introduction to BEYOND HUMAN KEN, Fletcher Pratt has his say about the distinction -- or lack thereof -- of science fiction from fantasy.

In his introduction, Conklin, after admitting that s-f is neither an Educational Force nor particularly Elevating, says that "What we do claim, we confirmed science fiction lovers, is that this type of fiction, when well done, is particularly attractive because it is so gay with the Idea. Profundity of character analysis, depth of observation and sharpness of social insight are not necessarily the major qualities for which science fiction is famous; I for one object to the analyses of those who try to apply to science fiction the same standards they would apply to James Joyce or Thomas Mann or William Faulkner. But if one reads it for sheer intellectual-imaginative fun, for often very sharp satiric comment, for a kind of mind-stretching flight above the humdrum, the crass, the workaday -- in other words, for escape from the dullness and boredom of life -- science fiction is just about what the doctor ordered."

The stories in BEYOND HUMAN KEN: Maclean, "The Fittest"; Tenn, "The House Dutiful"; Jameson, "Pride"; Dee, "Unwelcome Tenant"; Russell, "The Glass Eye"; Neville, "Underground Movement"; Padgett, "A Gnome There Was"; Blish, "Solar Plexus"; Heinlein, "Our Fair City"; Porges, "The Fly"; Fyfe, "Afterthought"; Boucher, "The Compleat Werewolf"; Leinster, "The Wabblers"; Seabright, "The Man Who Sold Rope to the Gnoles"; Clifton, "What Have I Done?"; Benet, "The Angel Was a Yankee"; del Rey, "Helen O'Loy"; Christopher, "Socrates"; a previously unpublished story by Laurence Manning, "Good-bye, Ilha!"; Leiber, "The Foxholes of Mars"; Sturgeon, "The Perfect Host".

The stories in OMNIBUS: Abernathy, "Heritage"; Asimov, "Homo Sol"; Blish, "The Box"; Boucher, "The Star Dummy"; Bradbury, "Kaleidoscope"; Brown, "The Weapon"; Clarke, "History Lesson"; Clifton, "The Conqueror"; de Camp, "Hyperpilosity"; del Rey, "Instinct"; Deutsch, "A Subway Named Mobius"; Ernst, "Nothing Happens on the Moon"; Fyfe, "Manners of the Age"; Geier, "Environment"; Gray, "The Bees From Borneo"; Griffith, "Zeritsky's Law"; Grinnell, "The Rag Thing"; Guin, "Trigger Tide"; Hilton-Young, "The Choice"; Jones, "A Stone and a Spear"; Keller, "The Doorbell"; Knight, "Catch That Martian"; Leimert, "John Thomas's Cube"; Leinster, "Plague"; London, "The Scarlet Plague"; Lovecraft, "The Color (sic) Out of Space"; MacDonald, "Spectator Sport"; MacLean, "And Be Merry"; Matheson, "Shipshape Home"; Maurois, "The War Against

the Moon"; Nourse, "High Threshold"; Padgett, "What You Need"; Phillips, "Counter Charm"; Pratt and Ruby, "The Thing in the Woods"; Robin, "Pleasant Dreams"; Rocklynn, "Backfire"; Russell, "Test Piece"; Sturgeon, "Never Underestimate"; Tenn, "Alexander the Bait"; van Vogt, "Recruiting Station"; Vance, "Winner Lose All"; Williams, "The Head Hunters"; Winterbotham, "The Fourth Dynasty".

Jack Kelsey

#### OTHER PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

I, ROBOT by Isaac Asimov. Grosset & Dunlap; \$1.00.

A reprint of the Gnome Press edition. A well-known, generally well-liked series of stories from the Astounding of the forties, neatly unified by inter-story interviews of Dr. Susan Calvin, foremost robo-psychologist.

THE PUPPET MASTERS by Robert A. Heinlein. New American Library; 175 p., 25¢.

A reprint of the recent Doubleday (and Galaxy) novel.

STAR MAN'S SON: 2250 A.D. by Andre Norton. Harcourt, Brace; 248 p., \$2.75.

A youthful mutant, 200 years after civilization's fall. Science fiction adventure for younger readers. Numerous illustrations that catch the spirit of the book by Nicolas Mordvinoff.

DAY AFTER TOMORROW'S WORLD by John Rossell. William-Frederick Press, 313 W. 35th St., New York City 1. 31 p., \$1.75.

Two years after "End-of-the-World Day" (hydrogen bombs, et. al.) a man from an underground colony returns to the surface. Not recommended.

LIVING ON by F. M. Wilcox. William-Frederick, 52 p., \$2.50.

Reincarnation.

JUDGEMENT NIGHT by C. L. Moore. Gnome, \$3.50.

The title novel and four of lesser length.

THE TITAN by P. Schuyler Miller. Fantasy, 252 p., \$3.00.

The title story and seven others.

THE PETRIFIED PLANET. Twayne; 263 p., \$2.95.

An introduction by John D. Clark defines two hypothetical planets, physically, chemically, astronomically, etc., and Fletcher Pratt, H. Beam Piper, and Judith Merrill each write a story about them.

The last three named were received shortly before going to press. Discussion of them will be in the next issue.

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Jack Cordes  
315 Catherine Street  
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If you have single items or a whole collection you want to sell, get in touch with me. I have been buying and selling fantasy fiction since 1939, and I always need more good stock. Right now I need Thrill Book magazines, Horrors, Terrors, Strange Tales, Unknowns, etc. and etc. Send me a list of what you have to sell, including the condition and price wanted.

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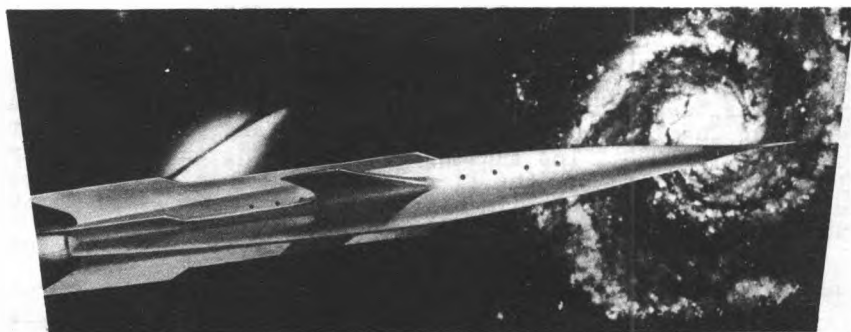
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# Orson Didn't Do It Alone

(The tenor of Orson Welles' famous radio show led to mounting terror...but there was also a baritone who did his humble bit.) by Kenneth Neale

Let's go back about fourteen years.

Let's go back to 1938. The date is October 30. The time is 8 p.m., Eastern Standard Time.

Here on the Pacific Slope it is just getting dark. And since we are in an era before television, people are listening to their radios.

A few people are tuned in to CBS to hear the arty "Mercury Theatre" but most people are looking forward to an hour of fun over NBC with Charlie McCarthy and Edgar Bergen.

You remember 1938.... That summer Jovian Satellites X and XI were discovered from Mount Wilson.... Ray Bradbury's first published story appeared in Imagination!... Astounding Stories became Astounding Science Fiction and new editor John W. Campbell, Jr., published the first s-f story of a man named Hubbard.... In a small laboratory in Germany man produced his first fission of an atom's nucleus.... Hitler was on the move in Europe.... War clouds were boiling up over the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, but few were very concerned. It was Sunday night and Charlie McCarthy was on....

An hour later there were pockets of panic throughout the nation.

The reason? You've probably guessed. Orson Welles' broadcast of "The War of the Worlds" had just ended. Human beings threw common sense out the window and panicked in a blind, animal-like stampede.

A 70-year-old farmer armed himself with a shotgun and barricaded himself behind grain sacks at Grovers Mill, New Jersey. Two heart attacks were reported in Tulsa. Police and newspaper switchboards were swamped in Kansas City and Omaha.

And, almost overnight, Orson Welles, the bad boy of radio, was boomed into stardom. Things moved quickly for Orson after that. Hollywood wanted him -- and got him. He made "Citizen Kane" and married Rita Hayworth...but that's another story.

The person responsible for all this has never received due credit. It wasn't Orson Welles. It was....

But let's take it in sequence. There are statistics showing that a small percentage of the radio audience that night was tuned to CBS. The bulk of the radio listeners was enjoying Charlie McCarthy, Edgar Bergen, and Don Ameche cutting up over NBC. The audience followed the antics of Charlie up to the end of the first skit, and then, when a guest male vocalist started with his first song of the evening, the NBC listeners started twirling their dials.

The statistics suggest that most of them twirled to CBS just in time to catch this:

"...Communication lines are down from Pennsylvania to the Atlantic Ocean. Railroad tracks are torn and service

from New York to Philadelphia discontinued except (for the) routing (of) some of the trains through Allentown and Phoenixville. Highways to the north, south and west are clogged with frantic human traffic..."

That did it. The dial twirlers were caught up in the middle of "The War of the Worlds" dramatization. If they had heard the program from the beginning they would have known what it was. And, a few minutes later, at the middle break, the announcer again told the audience that it was "just a play". But it was too late. The lid to Pandora's wonderful box was open and the Hobgoblins were running berserk throughout the 48 states!

Back at NBC the male vocalist completed his song and the Charlie McCarthy-Edgar Bergen show continued....

That male vocalist brought Orson Welles out of semi-obscure and into the public spotlight where he has remained for the last decade.

Even with people not listening to him, this male vocalist started a chain of happenstance unparalleled in show business.

Orson Welles owes him a great deal. The rest of us owe him at least some small credit for the bang-up job he did that night.

That male vocalist is my personal favorite. I attended a concert of his a couple of years ago. He's greying now but still great.

Who is he? Thought you must have guessed by now. The man who panicked a nation! That male vocalist was Nelson Eddy.

(Lest this explanation of a classic misunderstanding lead to another, the editor wants it noted that "Mercury" Welles, producer of "The War of the Worlds", should not be confused with the story's author, the other Hg Wells. Ed.)

## Quotable Correspondence

Has it occurred to you that the "purest" of all science fiction being published today is (intentionally) juvenilia? Clarke's recent Islands in the Sky is an example. Remember Clement's "Fireproof"? Clement made a short story out of the single gimmick of convection being dependent upon gravity. Clarke makes an incident of it -- and throws in a couple dozen others equally enlightening.

The reason for all this of course is that the kids haven't the advantage of many years of s-f reading behind them. In writing a book for such virgin territory Clarke can pack in great gobs of "pure science fiction". But a story written for we sophisticated, older and wiser hails, requires originality in its gimmicks. If a writer were sufficiently ingenious to pack that much new stuff into one yarn, it would be most uneconomical of him to do it.

I hope this observation does not lend support to our friends (usually the ghost story boys) who say that all s-f is juvenilia.

Ben Fletcher  
-22-

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I am giving you up to 50 per cent reduction on my marked prices for the following books from off my shelves. All are in original publisher's binding and in good condition unless otherwise noted. All are postpaid and if cash is sent with order, please include second choices if possible.

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5. AUBREY (Frank). The devil-tree of el dorado. Illus. First edition; good. N.Y., 1897. 3.50
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6. ANON. A strange manuscript found in a copper cylinder. 3/4 morocco; good. N.Y., 1889. 2.00
7. BAIN (F.W.) An incarnation of the snow. N.Y., 1908. 1.00
8. BALDWIN (James). Story of Seigfried. Illus. in color by Peter Hurd. (Waterstained on top margin of some leaves, not affecting text). N.Y., 1931. 1.25
9. BANGS (John Kendrick). The idiot at home. 1st ed.; good. N.Y. 1900. \$1
10. BARING-GOULD (S.) A book of ghosts. Illus. First edition; good but not fine. London, 1904. 2.50
11. BARR (Robert). In a steamer chair. Boards, fine. First ed., NY 1892 2.50
12. BECKFORD (William). The history of the Caliph Vathek (bound with) Rasselas by Samuel Johnson. Illus. with etchings. 2 vols. in one. London, 1883. 3.00
13. BELL (Neil). Precious porcelain. First edition. fine. Lond., 1931 2.00
14. BENSON (R.H.) A mirror of shalott. N.Y., 1907. Front blanks lacking 1.50
15. BERESFORD (J.D.) Signs and wonders. Scarce. N.Y., 1921. 3.00
16. BESANT (Walter). All sorts and conditions of men. An impossible story. Illus., pp. 412. New. Half cloth. N.Y. 1890. 2.00
17. BIERCE (Ambrose). In the midst of life. (Tales of soldiers and civilians). Lond., n.d. 2.00
18. BLACKWOOD (Algernon). Episodes before thirty. (His autobiography until then). N.Y., 1924. 2.50
19. \_\_\_\_\_. John Silence. Physician extraordinary. 1st edition; good. Lond. 1898. Rare. 5.00
20. BURDEKIN (Ray). The burning ring. N.Y., 1929. 1.00
21. CLARKE (Arthur C.) Sands of Mars. N.Y., 1952. New. 2.00
22. CONSCIENCE (Hendrik). "The sorcerer." (Bound with) The stolen child 2 vols. in one. Baltimore, 1894. 2.50
23. COOPER (James Fennimore). The crater; or, Vulcan's peak. Illus. by F.O.C. Darley. Cloth, fine. A scarce American Utopian novel. N.Y. 1861. 2.50
24. CORELLI (Marie). The soul of 111th. N.Y., 1890. 1.50
25. CRAM (Mildred). Stranger things. 1st ed., scarce. N.Y., 1923. 2.00
26. CRAWFORD (F. Marion). Wandering ghosts. (Covers soiled, front end leaf lacking). N.Y., 1911. 1.00
27. \_\_\_\_\_. With the immortals. First edition. Lond., 1888. 1.25
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30. CROCKETT (S.R.) Red cap tales. Stolen from the treasure chest of the wizard of the north. Illus. in color. Lond., 1904. 3.00
31. CURTIS (Wardon). Strange adventures of Mr. Middleton. First edition Chicago, 1903. 2.00
- \*\* Also on Ellery Queen's list of detective short stories.
32. CUMMINGS (Ray). The sea girl. 1st edition. Chicago, 1930. 2.50
33. CHAMBERS (Robert W.) The king in yellow. Illus. N.Y., 1902. Library edition; good. 3.00
34. CLINE (Leonard). Listen, moon! N.Y., 1926. 1.25
35. DEE (Sylvia). Dear guest and ghost. New. N.Y., 1950. 1.25
36. DOYLE (A. Conan). The black doctor and other tales of terror and mystery. N.Y., n.d. 1.75
37. DRAKE (H.B.). Cursed be the treasure. N.Y., 1928. 1.00
38. DUNSANY (Alfred Plunkett, Lord). Five plays. Boston, 1919. 1.50
39. FOURNIER d'ALBE (E.E.). Quo Vadimus? Some glimpses of the future. N.Y., 1925. 1.00
40. GARBETT (David). Lady into fox. Boards. N.Y., 1923. 1.00
41. GERHARDI (Wm.) & LUNN (Brian). Memoirs of Satan. Illus. by John Austen. N.Y., 1933. 2.50
42. GLASGOW (Ellen). The shadowy third and o.s. First edition. N.Y., 1923. 2.00
43. GODWIN (William). Lives of the necromancers. Lond., 1876, scarce. 2.00
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53. JAMESON (Malcolm). Atomic Bomb. Wraps. N.Y., 1946. .75
- \*\* A description of the Hiroshima explosion written originally in 1943.
54. JAMES (M.R.). Collected ghost stories. Pp. 647. N.Y., 1931. 2.50
55. JOKAI (Maurius). Timar's two worlds. (Loose in covers). N.Y., 1895 1.00
56. KARIG (Walter). Zotz! N.Y., 1947/ Fine. .50
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61. MACFALL (Haldane). The three stooges. N.Y., 1926. 1.50
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63. \_\_\_\_\_. Far off things. London, 1923. 1.00
64. \_\_\_\_\_. The three imposters. (Label lacking; backstrip lettered in ink). N.Y., 1923. 1.00
65. MARSHALL (Logan). Hundenburg's march into London. Cloth. Phila., 1916. 2.00
- 66/ \_\_\_\_\_. Same. Wrappers. 1.25
67. MEIK (Vivian). Veils of fear. London, 1924. 2.00
68. MUNDY (Talbot). King - of the Khyber rifles. N.Y., n.d. 1.00
69. POE (E.A.). Best tales. Pp. 476. M.L. 1.00
70. PRATT (Fletcher). Double jeopardy. N.Y., 1952. New. 2.00
71. POWYS (T.F.). Fables. N.Y., 1929. 1.75
72. REEVE (Clara). The old English baron (with) Walpole (Horace), The castle of Otranto. Illus. with etchings. 2 vols. in 1. Lond., 1883. 3.00
73. SALTEN (Felix). The hound of Florence. D/w. N.Y., 1930. 1.25
74. SHARP (William). (Fiona Macleod). Pharaids and the mountain lovers. N.Y., 1909. 1.50
75. SHUTE (Nevil). No Highway. N.Y., 1948. 1.00
76. STOKER (Bram). The watter's mou'. N.Y., 1895. 2.00
77. STOCKTON (Frank R.). Amos Kilbright; his adscititious experiences and o.s. First edition, N.Y., 1888. 1.50
78. T'AINÉ (John). The gold tooth. (Poor copy). N.Y., 1927. .60
79. THURBER (Alwyn M.). Zelma, the mystic; or white magic versus black. N.Y., 1897. 2.00
80. UNDERHILL (Evelyn). The gray world. N.Y., 1904. 2.00
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84. \_\_\_\_\_. A journey to the centre of the earth. N.Y., 1874. 2.00
85. WALPOLE (Hugh). All souls' night. N.Y., 1933. 1.00
86. WILLIAMS (Charles). Many dimensions. London, 1931. 1.25
87. YOUNG (F.B.) & (E.B.). Undergrowth. N.Y., 1920. 1.00
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# Notes From the Editor

THANK GOD I'M NOT A COLLECTOR!

Sometime, somewhere, there is going to be published a definition of science fiction. And you, and you, and I will read it, and we will agree -- yes, that is what we mean by "science fiction". It won't be defined with a single sentence; neither will it necessarily require a book. It may appear as part of a book review or of a preface to an anthology. It may be written by Boucher, Miller, or Heinlein. Or it may be written by Joe Collector and appear in the Advertiser. If the others will hold off for a year or two, my guess is that the definitive description of science fiction, one which will be as valid anyway ten years afterward as it will be when it's published, will be written by Joe Collector.

And who will he be? I couldn't guess. Right now I do not know any science fiction collectors. As a matter of fact, I suspect that there are none.

The task of building a collection is one of creation. Certainly the whole is equal to far more than the sum of the parts. And the omissions are of a significance equal to the inclusions. It is the collector's discrimination, put into practice, and his definition of his goal, that distinguishes him from the mere accumulator. Yes, I know of a number of impressively sizable accumulations of imaginative fiction, but I could not tell you who has the basis of what will in time be known as one of the great collections of science fiction.

Book collectors have been with us for a long while. For far more than a half a century, certainly. Yet it is only recently, several decades after the Wright brothers' initial success, that important collections of aeronautica have come into being. There are already in the formative stages some of the coming great collections of astronautica. Some of them will be virtually complete and in the maintenance stage when their subject becomes a reality. But when that happens, when the first Lunar travellers come home, what will be the state of the leading collections of science fiction?

Let's start planning them now. Science fiction, of course, is a new field. The important items, those that will in time be considered the cornerstones of any s-f collection, haven't even been named. The person who names them, whose choices are accepted by other authorities as the best (and who acquires them!), will be well on his way to pre-eminence in the s-f collecting field. And he will have the advantage of buying his "high spots" before a general recognition of their importance causes their prices to rise.

Oh, we have our higher-priced items now, true enough. But this potentially great s-f collector I'm thinking of will predict which of them will increase in value and which will decline and be more or less forgotten. Some astute trading

now will permit him to build a potentially valuable collection at a low cost.

(Fantasy is another matter entirely. Fantasy is as old as literature itself and the fantasy collector has no advantage over the collector of anything else. But the discovery of scientific method by the writing fraternity is an event of recent occurrence.)

The big question is, what will survive? Which books that we all know of now will be essentials to the s-f collection twenty years from now? Well, here's where we separate the men from the boys. Those of you who best answer that question -- and do it before too many others find the answers -- will be the successful s-f collectors of the near future.

What will be important to tomorrow's s-f collection? Will van Vogt, for instance, be considered important? My guess is that he will (even by those who never have thought his stuff good -- there's a distinction) and that a Weapon Makers 1st will increase in value. We've seen the 1st edition Slan take a drop in value with the appearance of the reprint. But it was the reader (and the collector who still isn't edition-conscious) who caused Slan's price first to rise and then allowed it to fall. (Another influence that I suspect is already vanishing is that of the "completist" collector. He is mostly of the pre-war generation. In his day there was too little published for him to be selective, and completion was a possibility.) The increasing appearance of the collector who will give consideration to the influences affecting s-f's evolution, who will evaluate a book in terms of the state of the art at the time of the book's publication, will, I think, bring about a renewed demand for Slan in its first edition.

What else? The Skylark of Space is a paramount milestone and it's first edition isn't very common. Consider Phil Stong's The Other Worlds and Wollheim's Pocketbook of Science-Fiction. Many collectors do not seem to realize that an anthology may be a first edition. Actually, thus far every short story s-f anthology has been a first for at least some of its stories. And do you have a fine copy of Ralph 124C 41+? Already it's not too easily found. And it will probably be one of the most important items of all.

The results of P. Schuyler Miller's poll (ASF, January '53 issue) provide a guide, though I suspect not a very dependable one for the collector. As Miller mentions, the influence of paper-bounds (and the matter of easy availability generally) is readily apparent in the voting. But it is the equally important but not so easily available items that it is most important to secure in the near future.

And I read a gross lack of imagination, or broad knowledge, in the selections mentioned in the Miller poll "A" list (which list is of the books voted most significant in s-f's evolution). This indicates that the to-be-important earlier titles aren't generally sought as yet. Unless they fall within the domains of collectors in other fields, the game is wide open for you.

I think that the s-f collector has a lot to learn from other book collectors. At any rate, our field has been particularly slow in giving attention to the association item and to the holograph and manuscript. A particularly pleasant way of being indoctrinated with the philosophy and methods of book collecting is through reading The Amateur Book Collector. (1822 School St., Chicago 13. \$2.00 for the year of ten issues.) In particular, I recommend that less experienced collectors read John London's excellent article on the collecting of aeronautica in the September 1952 issue. Implicit in it is a lot of methodology applicable to any field.

And let us not allow familiarity to cause us to overlook the wonderful, darned near unique, opportunity given the s-f collector in beginning his collection at a time when so many of the early, collected authors are still living, and, in fact, attend our conventions. I don't suggest that all and sundry besiege them with requests to inscribe their books -- but an approach evidencing a modicum of intelligence and a maximum of sincerity will often be successful. And corollary to that, the significant association items of the near future are right now in the making. Here you have a chance to guess twice: about the author and the owner of the book. And once you've decided what game you're after, the actual bagging of it, in the case of the association item, will not be the smallest of your difficulties...and may require a longish wait.

In the meantime, in future issues I'll try to present my -- or someone's -- guesses as to what are the coming s-f high spots.

BAD NEWS....

It had to happen sometime, of course; and the surprising aspect of it is that it has waited so long to happen. But now -- well, I'm sorry, but SFA's subscription price must be increased.

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I want to thank everyone who has been helpful in obtaining new subscribers and advertisers for SFA. And to the John S. Swift Co., the Advertiser's printers, whose recent price increase is their first in over five years of increasing inflation, I am also most grateful.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

"Three Stories by Jack Vance" by Arthur J. Cox

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