

No.41

ECTOR

CONTRIBUTIONS

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CONTENTS

	Page
Editorial... ..	3
MIGRANT ANGEL : Chris Priest..	7
NATURAL SELECTION: E. C. Tubb.	13
STORY... Dan Morgan..	5
VICE-CHAIRMAN'S REPORT..	22
I. C. D. : Phil Muldowney	24
THE BINDING MOEBIUS STRIP: H Ken Bulmer....	29
GENERAL CHUNTERINGS. Kenneth F. Slater... ..	26
MAGAZINE REVIEWS: Chris Priest... ..	38

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EDITORRIBLE

Back last Spring, Doreen said to me that we should produce an amateur magazine in East Anglia. I took evasive action to get the matter postponed. Unfortunately Doreen and I are producing an amateur magazine in East Anglia. It just so happens that the members of the B.S.F.A. are equally unfortunate because it is VECTOR we are producing.

Let us start with the apologies. Owing to general haste bronchitis, bad weather and the Government, the typing is not what it might be. Therefore please accept Doreen's **apologies** for typos, miss-spellings and other faults of this nature. From my side, please accept any apologies that may be necessary to cover the vagaries in production. This is being done on a 12 year old Roneo, hand operated and on it I produce catalogues. I had intended to buy a new machine this winter, but there again the Government stepped in.

On the matter, we are if not actually proud, reasonably happy. We had no access to the material in the Publication Officer's possession but with the co-operation of the contributors - who had only some three or four days notice, we have managed to amass what we feel is a very good although somewhat unbalanced selection. I trust you will all appreciate the general difficulty and at this point I think it wise to advise all contributors that any material they have on hand, should be sent to the Secretary and not to the Publications Officer, until further notice. This includes Letters of Comment and other communications which in the normal way would go to the Publication Officer.

Since I wrote the Vice-Chairman's report included herein, we have heard from Chris Priest, the Association's Auditor who says that on the face of things, the 1965 financial position may not be as bad as feared. This however, will not alter the general position which is still far from

In view of the general position and lack of contact with the Publications Officer, Doreen and I will produce the next two issues of Vector in a format and at a price similar to the current issue. This should bring us up to the Annual General Meeting when I trust we shall be able to report to the membership exactly how we stand - even if we are lying on our backs at the time!

At this juncture, our heartiest thanks to our contributors this issue for their response to our plea and a warning to others that a letter asking for co-operation with a contribution for the next issue will be coming through the post in a day or two - you lucky people! Letters of Comment will be welcomed.

K.F.S.

A Merry Christmas
and
A Happy Hogmanay
to all members and fans
everywhere

STORY

BY DAN
MORGAN

ANALECTA

In the first light of dawn, Grope left the bunker and walked up the rocky path towards the anal landscape. It had been raining during the night, a heavy fall of words. As he limped along, carrying his neuronic totem at the slope, they opened their tiny carnosofibrous mouths and begged to be chazen. Ignoring their supplications, he gleaned only the most obscure, brushing off the fine patina of crud before dropping each into an enamel bucket, which was attached to a rectilinear string about his waist.

IS THIS THE ODEON, LEICESTER SQUARE?

The phallic towers of Skegness, suspended like organic expressions of the agony of subjective herpetology. "What are they?" asks Dr. Manchester, fingering the mandalas with unsure eyes. In the distance, beyond the Mens' Urinal, they are erecting another huge statue of Kim Novak, breasts twentyfive feet from nipple to nipple. The workers sang the anthems of a lost alien race with bizarre titubancy. At night, by the light of a thousand erubescantly burning phrases, the statue merged with the shadow of the abandoned B 29 Super-fortress, re-creating the utter psychic alienation of a Dali landscape

PADISHAH

The concrete of the flyover was littered with spilled rhetoric, old tyres and an empty coke bottle. Beyond he could see the four-hundred foot high Max Ernst portrait of Sir John Wilder. At first glance it seemed to be a bull's head, sprouting fire and holding a decapitated Bligh; but as he approached he discovered that it was in fact a piece of coded terrain belonging to the organic landscape, a pre-uterine image borrowed from Kamsim's ECH!

BUT I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THE THING WAS LOADED!

The Doctor was a transvestite knurdle twitcher, who had once worked as a surrogate in a Parisian brothel. He was now engaged in the creation of an epic poem, composed entirely in epitrite feet, relating his subjective experiences to the horizontal perspectives of sur-realist conjugation.

ISOPHORETIC, L XERO.

"War is hell!" said Mona, exposing her gill-slits. Travelling swiftly through the night, they passed the rubble of nine-hundred and seventy-five concrete towers, the Houses of Parliament and two annihilated chicken-farms, covered to a depth of fifteen feet in under-chewed bubble gum. "Frying tonight!" exclaimed Jackie Kennedy, as they sighted the three giant steel bowls of the radio-telescope. On the other side of the operating theatre, Lee Harvey Oswald was decalcinating quietly, in full view of the audience.

YES, SIR, THAT'S MY CATHETER!

(Rope's hand hesitated on the zip of his personal mytk.) The umbrella in the operating theatre, and in involuntary spasm of the urether, making inverted contact with the pudenda of the Axminster carpet. "You can't afford Cyril Lord!" screamed Yoshiwara. But the timeless moment was past. Dropping the enamel bucket, Grope falls to the white-painted catwalk and embraces the rusting bicycle wheel. "Cat-faced woman, with your heiratic eyes - I love you!

Nothing happens.....

MIGRANT ANGEL

by CHRIS
PRIEST

On August 6th, 1945, the 509th composite Group of the U.S.A. Air Force, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Paul W. Tibbets, was ordered to drop the world's first nuclear weapon on the Japanese town of Hiroshima. The raid was led by the B-29 Superfortress piloted by Major Claude Eatherly, one of America's finest Air Force Captains. Eatherly flew ahead of the main group of bombers, and selected and cleared the target zone. He then rejoined the main group, and flew in formation as the plane carrying the weapon, the Enola Gay, made its bomb-run and released the weapon.

After the blast, Eatherly circled low over the devastated city, witnessing in graphic detail the burning children of Hiroshima. Three days later, he carried out the same duties in the raid on Nagasaki. After the war, Eatherly took part in the 1947 nuclear test at Bikini, and flew through the atomic cloud in his B-29 with the purpose of testing the effects of radioactivity.

On the night that President Truman, as a direct result of the success of Bikini, order the production of the Hydrogen Bomb, Claude Eatherly attempted to commit suicide. He was taken to hospital, where he soon recovered, and was released. Shortly afterwards, he was arrested for a number of petty frauds and thefts, and was committed to the Veterans Administration mental hospital in Waco, Texas.

In subsequent trials, to establish both his culpability and sanity, many doctors from the VA hospital testified that Eatherly was suffering from acute guilt-conscience as a result of his flights against Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and he was found to be legally insane. His crimes, they said, were committed through a desire to receive punishment.

Claude Eatherly is now a worker for peace. His income from film-rights and book-royalties is donated to Japanese charities. In Japan he is a popular figure, now entirely forgiven for his war crimes.

That, basically, is the legend of Claude Robert Eatherly.

How this myth came about, and how it seized the imagination of the free world in a time when a nuclear holocaust could be precipitated at almost any moment, is the subject of The Hiroshima Pilot by William Bradford Huie (Consul Books 5s. 0d). This book, through the kind of detailed and patient reporting that is the trademark of contemporary American journalism, examines the life of Claude Eatherly and compares recorded fact with the legend. Huie's intention was evidently to expose the myth, and demonstrate the weaknesses of the man. Although he succeeds in this, he has contributed even more to the myth than perhaps he intended.

Claude Eatherly, until the time of the Hiroshima bombing, was a personification of the typical U.S. Air Force bomber pilot: a daring flier, a compulsive gambler and a moderately heavy drinker. Prior to his joining the 509th Composite Group he had had no combat experience, although he had been a commissioned officer since before Pearl Harbour. This in itself is an early contributory factor to later developments. He joined an air-crew who'd survived previous battles, and Eatherly lied to them to cover his own inexperience.

During the actual raid Eatherly was indeed flying, and his plan, the Straight Flush, acted as weather-reconnaissance. At the time of the actual blast Eatherly was more than 225 miles from Hiroshima; the most distant recorded observer of the fireball was more than 25 miles nearer. Here again is another point: for sixteen months the officers in the 509th had been told that it would be their action that would end the war. On their return

to the base at Tinian, the men of Eatherly's crew were greeted with enthusiasm, but the real publicity from the Press was given to Tibbets in the Enola Gay. At the time, this affected Eatherly deeply

He was disappointed at Bikini, also. Selected as one of the five crews who would actually make this well-publicised drop, he consistently muffed his practice-flights. Another plane made the drop, and Eatherly's much-vaunted flight through the nuclear cloud took a lesser degree of the publicity.

In 1947, Eatherly was dismissed from the U.S. Air Force for cheating in an exam. This was later modified into an honorable discharge, so that Eatherly, who had an excellent record, might not lose his Veteran benefits.

It is Eatherly's life as a civilian for the next nine years that contribute much of the background for the creators of the Eatherly myth. In this time, a sad and frustrating period, Eatherly drifted from job to job. At one time he was involved with an incredible plot to invade Cuba, and it was the purely mercenary motivation in this venture that was later to invalidate much of his myth. He spent a lot of this time in the VA hospital, receiving treatment for anxiety symptoms. He "drunked" and gambled heavily, and his marriage broke up. Once, he was arrested for passing fraudulent cheques. Significantly, neither the memory of Hiroshima nor any other of his war experiences had any apparent influence on his life at this time. In 1956, Eatherly, together with another man, broke into a small post-office and attempted to steal some money orders. This was followed by one or two other crimes of equally small importance, and, two months later, Eatherly was arrested again. Because of complications with the VA authorities it was not until March 1957, that he was eventually taken to Tarrant County Jail to await trial. It was here that a reporter, Jim Vachule of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, in searching out a human-interest story, at last connected Eatherly's "being at Hiroshima" with his present predicament. Working almost entirely without background fact (fact that in normal circumstances would not be necessary for his purpose) Vachule published three successive news-stories about Eatherly.

It was these three stories that started the myth. Eatherly had asked Vachule whether he could help him, and Vachule had told him he'd do his best. Eatherly's probable motive in this was to avoid punishment. At the time he was receiving a 100% disability-pension, and was undergoing neuropsychiatric treatment. Since the war, none of his actions had had any apparent connection with Hiroshima, and there is no reason to believe that Eatherly should spring this one deliberately. Paradoxically, according to the myth Eatherly's only wish is to be punished, but on the one occasion when he mentioned Hiroshima in the context of his crimes he was using it as a means of avoiding punishment.

Vachule's three news-stories won a prize, and were dramatized into a sponsored television play. Dramatic licence was used liberally, and many of the facts of Eatherly's life were distorted out of recognition. Later, when a film-script was prepared (the as yet-unproduced Medal in the Dust) the television script was a great inspiration to the story, and the facts became even further distorted. Although the film has not been produced, the script was given high-pressure publicity, and copies of it have been sent to many parts of the world.

Eatherly's trials, first for the criminal indictment, and later for a lunacy hearing, further developed the myth. By now, things had passed beyond Eatherly's control. Although he was found not guilty of the criminal offence, he was later adjudged to be insane, and was committed for further treatment to the VA hospital in Waco.

The facts of the case are undoubtedly sad. In the space of twenty years, a man has dropped from the glamour of wartime Air Force flying to a schizophrenic neurotic, living constantly on the edge of the law.

His myth has been an impersonal thing to him. True, he has received money because of it, and much publicity. But if Eatherly were honest with himself, He'd acknowledge that the nature of the myth has little

connection with his own identity.

The question remains: how can a story which is basically tragic be elevated to the status of a myth? How can a single neurotic, often in the closed ward of an asylum, often receiving shock treatment over extended periods, often breaking the law, become a figure in twentieth-century mythology, ranking at times with the coming of a second Messiah?

The answer is twofold. Firstly, there is the society in which Eatherly found himself after the war. At this time, the dangers of unexpected nuclear holocaust had made themselves apparent to the mind of the average American. This alone produced a kind of national paranoia. Also, the American nation had not (has not? yet satisfied itself that its actions at Hiroshima and Nagasaki were totally justified. Germany has been punished for Auschwitz and Cechau, Japan has paid for the Burma railway. But America, in three short days, milled nearly 200,000 defenceless civilians with a weapon whose power was hardly estimable, and whose side-effects were totally unknown. No military tactician's excuses will entirely satisfy the unconscious corporate mind of post-nuclear American society.

Thus, when Eatherly's case first appeared with small beginnings in a local Texas tabloid, the American machine geared to a guilt-complex undefined but entirely real, used Eatherly as a catalyst for its own expression. Somehow, the awfulness of Hiroshima could be condensed into the personification of one man.

The second reason that the myth has lasted as long as it has, rests with Eatherly himself. Of all people in America, he is the only one who knows the entire truth. He is insane, but not deranged. Eatherly is logical, and rational. He knows what is happening, and always has. At any time he liked, he could have killed the myth. He could have told the world why he was running guns to Cuba. Why he cheated at the examination. Why he tried to commit suicide. But Eatherly acted in a way that was wholly consistent with his character. Always an egocentric, an admission that the story was faked would have delivered a telling personal blow to his ego. The myth compensates for the lack of acclaim he received after Hiroshima. It compensates for failing at Bikini, for being

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sacked from the Air Force, for the drunkenness, the degrading jobs, the broken marriage. And it compensates for the insanity.

William Bradford Huie's book is an excellent example of fair, honest and creative journalism. It sets out to be a total assessment of a man, and to break his myth. But it doesn't do this, nor will anything that is further written about Eatherly. The legend has been enhanced by this book, not the opposite. Eatherly has acquired an image, and it will stay with him. With American society still feeling the impact of Hiroshima, and living in the draught of the Cold War, Eatherly's myth cannot die.

Claude Eatherly was, is and will always be the Hiroshima Pilot.

N3F STORY COMPETITION

Not all news I've received lately has been bad and this week I heard from Mrs. Alma Hill with the N3F Story Competition results.

She was very pleased to inform me that of the entries received from BSFA members, three were among the first four places.

<u>Mrs. Elsie Walton</u>	<u>PROJECT NEW EARTH.</u>	1st.
<u>Duel In Midair. Chet Cottfield</u>	<u>NFFF</u>	2nd.
<u>Douglas Fulthorpe</u>	<u>IN AN ENGLISH GARDEN</u>	3rd
<u>Mrs. Rosemary Sudbury</u>	<u>I, ROSALIND</u>	4th.

Frederick Pohl is contacting Llsie regarding publication of her sotry and will consider publishing Douglas's story subject to certain revisions.

I am sure all members will join me in congratulating the successful BSFA members and commiserate with the other unsuccessful entrants. (including myself!)

NATURAL SELECTION

by E.C.TUBB

He awoke and was not alone. Sometime in the night it had come to him, this thing he did not recognise, this strangeness which filled him so that he lay, eyes open, staring dully at the pastel walls of his cubicle, devoid of interest or anticipation and that, today, was the strangest thing of all.

A signal light flared on the ceiling warning him that he was already late. He blinked at it, a part of him wishing the irritation would cease so that he could forget even the necessity of thought. It did not cease and, after a period of time which seemed timeless, he sighed and reluctantly rose from his bed.

It took effort to rise, more to wash, a tremendous concentration to dress. Once he found himself standing before the mirror, his face half-shaved, the soap dry on his other cheek. And there was a time when he realised that he sat on the edge of the bed, one boot in his hand, the other on his foot and, how long he had sat there, he had no way of telling. But the signal light still flared its peremptory summons. There was still time.

Breakfast was an ordeal. He looked at the food on his plate and pushed it away knowing, that if he ate, he would be violently ill. Instead he drank cup after cup of strong black coffee, smoking continuously, concentrating with dull apathy on the cigarette, oblivious to the noise and chatter around him.

He was not normal, deep inside his mind he knew it. Somehow, between sleep and waking, something had happened to him so that, when he woke, he was not the same man as when he retired. What it was he didn't know, he had never felt like this before. He should have been worried, terrified even, but worry and terror are emotions and he had no capacity for emotion. All he felt was a tremendous disinterest as if the universe had closed in around him so that nothing outside his own senses had any importance whatsoever. And yet this feeling was wrong, terribly so. Wrong and dangerous. At all costs he must hide it from the world.

"Something the matter, Jack?" Ken Martin, smooth, stable, well-meaning and confident, smiled as he forked up his food.

"No." He didn't want to answer, the effort of speech was greater than he wished to make, yet silence would have betrayed him.

"You sure?" Ken helped himself to more food. "From where I sit you look like a man who's just seen his best girl out with another man."

Smile, he told himself savagely. Lift up the corners of your mouth, crease your cheeks, satisfy the fool that you appreciate his humour.

"Hey, Winshaw, you tasted something bad?". The voice came from lower down the table. Another echoed it.

"That's the taste of defeat, man. Didn't you know?"

They all laughed, but there was more in their laughter than humour. The course had been long, the strain terrific, the end almost in sight. Now, of the six seated at the table, three would be chosen. It was natural that their laughter should be tinged with hope. The more who failed the greater the chances of those who remained.

He should have been frightened, sickened

at the prospect of failure, but he just didn't care.

It hadn't always been like that. Once he had been as eager as the rest. He had a dream and that dream was his life. Heaven, to him, was the uniform and insignia of one selected for space. He could imagine no hell worse than failure.

"There is one thing you must all realise," Captain Lemor had said at the first interview. "Of the thirty in this class only three will be finally selected. We want the best, we can afford nothing less, but the failures need not reproach themselves. They may be perfectly fitted for other duties."

He had stood, hands on hips, sunken eyes glaring from beneath bushy eyebrows. His face was lined as if scored by an engraving tool. His body thick and solid, his hands splayed instruments of his will.

"I warn you now," he'd said harshly. "This isn't going to be easy. It is my intention to break every single one of you - if I can."

His score to date was twenty-four down and three to go.

He inhaled, knowing that he was smoking too much but not caring. He should have eaten but it was too late for that now. He should have joined in the jokes and banter but that, also, had been impossible. The thing within him obsessed him too greatly for that. It was like a shroud, dulling his vision so that colours lost their brilliance, distorting the air so that sounds seemed muffled and far away. He was like a man sealed in invisible walls detached from the normal world.

"For Pete's sake snap out of it, man!" Ken was looking at him, his eyes anxious. Ken was his friend, he meant well. Yesterday they had laughed and planned and joked together. Today he was an irritating nuisance.

"I'M all right."

"Like hell you are!" Ken glanced over his shoulder, conscious of invisible, watching eyes. "Brace up, Jack. This is the last day. You can't flunk out now.

The words and what they implied should have brought terror. Yesterday they would have filled him with cold panic, but now his apathy was a shield against all stimulus.

"Listen." Ken lowered his voice, smiling as if he were whispering a risqué joke, his eyes belying his smile. "We're neck and neck, all six of us, and little things are going to decide the issue. You didn't eat any breakfast and that's bad, but maybe you can get away with it. You're smoking too much, bad again, but you may be lucky. Have you got a reason if they ask you about it?"

He remained silent, speech was too great an effort. Ken sighed, hesitated, then tried again.

"Think of what's behind us, Jack. Think of what we've been through. Think too of what the future could hold." His eyes burned with what he was trying to communicate. "Think of it - then maybe you won't want to throw it all away."

He shrugged, then immediately knew, by Ken's expression, that he had done the wrong thing. He should watch himself, he supposed. He should smile at the right time, mask his face and shield his eyes, act as if nothing was wrong. But something was wrong and he had never pretended to be an actor.

He didn't mind the waiting. He sat, arms resting on knees, head lowered as he sat in the soft chair in the recreation room. He felt no thrill of anticipation, none of the tenseness which had become so familiar to him during the past few months. He paid no attention to the others, each sitting in his chair, some of them smoking, all of them pretending to be engrossed on one of the magazines scattered on small tables throughout the room.

He had no desire even to smoke. Smoking required an effort and any effort was too much. He simply sat, body lax, not focussing his eyes, not listening, hardly even thinking. He was like a man in a fog, without aim or purpose. He was here. They

would send for him and then he would move elsewhere. It was something about which he had to make no decision.

A signal lamp flashed. Ken rose from his seat with an alacrity which betrayed his close concentration on the light. He closed his magazine, put in neatly on one of the tables, made as if to adjust his uniform and then, remembering, forced himself to be casual. He didn't look towards Jack as he walked to the door.

The door closed behind him and he was lost to three members of his class. This was the time of deciding. The successful would meet again, the failures perhaps console themselves in the nearest bar; the successful and the failures would be parted forever.

Would he miss Ken? He thought about it, playing with the concept as a man wearing gloves would finger some object of momentary interest. They had been close in the past, would he miss him in the future? Would he have to miss him?

He had no doubts but that Ken would pass. Until this morning he had had no doubts as to himself. He still had no doubts but not for the same reason. Now he just didn't care.

The interviews were long. A steward brought coffee and cakes into the room, setting down the tray on a table, passing the filled cups and plates of pastry. The others, only two now, ate hungrily, gulping at their coffee, displaying a heathily normal appetite. He did not eat. He remained immobile, his eyes towards the floor, the coffee the steward had given him growing cold at his side.

One of the other men coughed.

"Whimshaw."

He paid no attention.

"Say, Whimshaw!" The man raised his voice. "I guess that's for you."

Slowly he raised his head, looked at the flashing of the signal light, remotely wondering as to the mechanics of his operation. An ordinary light bulb, he guess, connected to an interrupter circuit, no one would have the patience to press and release a button so frequently and

with such regularity.

"It's for you." The man who had coughed jerked his thumb towards the door.

Slowly he rose and went towards it.

They were very thorough. He had met them before or others so like them that it made no difference. Three of them with their white coats and gleaming spectacles, their papers and charts, their cards and toys and puzzles. He had faced them all before, answering all their questions, finding refuge in unassailable truth. He had nothing to fear.

"Sit down, Mr. Whimshaw. Will you please fill out this form. Will you please assemble this cube...this cone...this ovoid...this thing. Will you please tell us what patterns you see in these blotches. Will you please answer, immediately, with the first word that comes into your mind. Will you... will you...will you..."

They were polite, they had no reason to be otherwise. They held his future in their hands and they were aware of their power. They tested him as they had tested him a hundred times before.

"Tell us, Mr. Whimshaw, when you woke this morning did you feel any strangeness?"

He shook his head.

"You were late in rising. Late, also, in answering the signal lamp outside. How do you account for this?"

"I just didn't notice." He would have preferred to remain silent but they demanded an answer. "Just nervous, I guess."

"Nervous?" It was like the strike of a snake.

"Excited, then."

"Indeed?"

"I must have been thinking of something else." Why did he have to explain?

The tests continued, silly things without apparent bearing on his chosen profession. He did them all, dully, dutifully, without interest. His eyelids grew heavy with the desire for sleep and the escape it would bring. The world was an irritation which he found almost impossible to tolerate.

The men in white finished what they had to do. One of them spoke to him.

"That will be all, Mr. Whimshaw. Will you please go into the other room now, no, not that door, that leads back into reception, this one please."

He altered direction found the correct door, opened it and passed through. In a small room fitted with a wide desk Captain Lemor sat waiting for him.

"Sit down," said Lemor. "Relax." He sat back in his chair, his eyes shadowed by their brows. "Tell me," he said abruptly, "Do you know what is the matter with you?"

He thought about it. He shook his head.

"I thought not." Lemor offered a cigarette, helped himself, lit both of them. "If you'd had a normal emotional cycle you would have been flunked a long time ago. This must be a rather unpleasant experience for you." He looked at the tip of his cigarette. "I am talking," he said gently, "about the fit of depression with which you woke this morning."

The cigarette fumed between his fingers. Like the words it seemed devoid of meaning.

"You see," continued Lemor, "you probably never realised it but you were an exception. Now you're not. Now because of the way you feel, you're just one of us." He drew thoughtfully on his cigarette. "Have you ever wondered why we have to fail so many applicants?"

"You want the best," said Whimshaw dully.

"We want the best for our purpose," corrected Lemor. "Unfortunately what we want isn't all that plentiful. Fitness, of course, but that isn't enough. All the High-G tests, the reaction speeds, all the rest of it; none helps if the most important factor is missing." He leaned a little forward over his desk. "You see, Whimshaw, we don't

want humans."

He waited for the expected answer, when it didn't come he shrugged.

"You've got it bad," he said. "Well, that was to be expected." His voice grew casual. "You've failed you know."

Whimshaw lifted his head.

"You've failed," repeated Lemor. I'm trying to tell you why you failed and, to convince you that, in a way, you've also won."

"Thank you."

"You're trying to be ironic," said Lemor. You aren't making a good job of it. But then, you never have made a good job of displaying emotion, have you?" He didn't wait for an answer. "I said a little while ago that we didn't want humans in space. Perhaps I'd better make that clear. It is a rule that the majority shall decide what a thing shall be; society is built on that premise. The majority of mankind have emotions. They operate on a cycle swinging from hysteria to manic depressive. There are the extremes of course, but within those limits every human being, by their own definition, experience emotional heights and depths. Everyone, or almost everyone has felt elated or depressed. We want the few who have never felt any extremes of emotion at all. In short, we want protoplasmic robots."

"And I'm not one of them?"

"You've shown, by your present emotional state, that you belong to the majority. That's what I meant when I said you had won. You have proved yourself to be truly human - but humans do not belong in space." Lemor paused, his eyes very gentle. "You are feeling better now, aren't you. Not so depressed."

"Yes." Whimshaw sat and examined himself. It was true. The thing with which he had woken was dissipating, the light and colour and interest returning to the world.

He looked at Lemor, for the first time, as if he were another human being.

"A quick swing," said the Captain. "You're lucky, some people suffer for days. You can understand now, can't you, why you had to be failed?"

Whimshaw could understand. Take men, lock them into metal, send them into the unknown. Coop, them in tiny quarters on the moon and demand that they live in a world of machines as if, they too, were machines. Emotion has no place in such a world. Elation, depression, they were explosives needing only a tiny stimulus to erupt in destructive frenzy. So find men without emotions.

Find protoplasmic robots, gild them with glamour, give them the uniform, the insignia, the conviction that they were the cream of the human race. And then send them to where no normal human could go.

"We won't waste you," said Lemor. "You're fit, trained and useful. Space is not for you but there are plenty of other jobs." He rose, held out his hand. "And don't feel bad about it. Remember that. There is nothing for you to feel bad about at all.

He watched the young man rise and walk from the room, his head high, his steps light, his depression vanishing as he walked. Lemor sighed and resumed his seat.

It made sense and, in a way, it was true enough but plausible though it was it wasn't the whole story. Depression, he knew, was caused by frustration, by not being able to do the thing you wanted to do. And what you wanted to do, really wanted, was not always the thing you thought it was.

The training programme was intended to break men, to find their weaknesses and it did a good job of doing it. But there were always the exceptions, those who could, all unknowingly, fool the psychologists. But they couldn't fool themselves, not really, not way down deep.

And, when it came to the point of no-return, Nature had its own means of selection.

The End.

VICE-CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

BY K.F.S.

When I said in my 'Platform' that the main reason I wished to become a member of the Committee was to discover why it took projects in the B.S.F.A. so long to materialise, it was obvious to everyone that I was to discover why the wheels went round. I now know! Mostly - they don't!

I have no brick-bats to throw in any particular direction; I have one or two compliments to pay which I shall do later, but first I must report that the B.S.F.A. is in a regrettably serious condition at present.

At the time of writing, the accounts which were thrown out by the Membership at the Annual General Meeting at Gt. Yarmouth are being audited. No matter what the result of this audit is, it cannot hide the fact that our present expenditure exceeds our income. The Committee have already taken what steps they can to offset this by announcing an increase in the membership fees in the last Bulletin. Other efforts to economise must be made and this will, I think, be a matter for a special sub-committee to take under consideration. On the same subject, i.e. money, it is also, in my opinion, essential that a set of rules for the guidance of the Treasurer, Committee members and co-opted members handling funds be laid down. I shall be asking the Auditor and the Parliamentarian to make suggestions regarding this.

As will be obvious, we are also somewhat adrift on the Editorial sea. For this issue, the Secretary and I have stepped in to produce a sort of 'scratch' Vector. This and my earlier comment only go to prove to me a point which I have hammered and complained about at many A.G.M.'s; that enthusiasm is a very fragile thing and that in person affairs

take priority over the problems of voluntary committees. The obvious solution to this is, of course, the B.S.F.A. should pay someone to perform its main executive Office, but the financial position has never been sufficiently sound and certainly is not at present feasible. This, however, is a target for which the Association must aim.

I would like to express thanks to the Parliamentarian, Phil Rogers, for assistance outside the duties of his office in sorting out those accounts into something which we could present to the Auditor; this at a time when I know he was busy on other things which were both commercially and socially of more importance. Archie Mercer receives appreciation for his unflagging efforts to maintain the Committee as an entity, and for the production of the Bulletins and some extra oddments which have helped to fill the Vectorial void. So far I've not heard from Auditor Chirs Friest since we dumped our prime headache in his lap, but I know he is working on a solution and (I trust) an analysis which will undoubtedly prove helpful.

Surprisingly, the Officer on the Committee who has displayed more diligence than any of the others including myself, is the one occupying her post by default, the Secretary. Without her persistence the B.S.F.A. would by this time require rescuing from the Corporation Waste Dump into which any less devoted person would have consigned the whole horrible headache! Everybody please note that Doreen is still not dismayed and I feel that with the co-operation of the entire membership and the active assistance of those members who are called upon to give it, we shall not only be able to survive our present difficulties, but shall by the knowledge of our faults and their causes if we really do investigate them, be able to place the Association on a firmer foundation.

So will everyone please refrain from wild criticism unfunny jokes and similar unhelpful activities; but if you are in a position to offer time, equipment or (arf-arf!) money, let the Secretary know.

As soon as we have actual details of our problems, we will present them to you for constructive criticism.

December 1966,

Having only recently taken over the I.C.D., I think a statement of policy is in order. The aim of the I.D.C. (as I personally see it) is to encourage the development of the International aspect of Science Fiction. While it is important that fan groups retain their own individual identity, only benefit can come from International Contact, the exchange of views, ideas and mutual help.

First the news. The Oslo University SF group ANLARA is to produce a Fanzine called MINAN, financed by a grant from Oslo University. Besides printing some original material, foreign articles on S.F. will be used, and there will probably be some articles in English, French and German. The chief editor is to be Tom Irgens.

ANLARA have aroused Norwegian publishers' interest in S.F. Ray Bradbury's 'FAHRENI 451' and an anthology, 'Og Jorden Skal beve....' by Jon Bing and Tor Age Bringsvaerd will be published next spring. This is the first serious SF published in Norway for over ten years.

Arrangements have been started by the Gothenburg SF Club to have an SF Convention in Sweden, at the same time as the British Convention, Easter 1967.

The International Fortean Organisation has recently been formed. It is designed to be a reference point for curious souls. It is aimed to issue a lithoed journal, and members can purchase Fortean material at 10% discount. Those interested should contact INFO, 801 North Daniel St., Arlington, Virginia 22201 U.S.A.

Fanzines and magazines available:

Australian SF Review edited by John Bangsund, Nos. 1 - 4. This is a very good fanzine with a format and editorial policy somewhat similar to Pete Weston's SPECULATION. It is backed by the Australian professionals, and there are articles by Brian W. Aldiss,

John Carnell, Michael Moorcock and Langdon Jones, Lee Harding, John Baxter among others.

The Italian prozine GAMMA 9, consists largely of Italian translations of Issac Asimov's "The Martian Way" and "Sucker Bait". GAMMA costs 400 Lira, the equivalent of 5s. 5d, having 176 pages compared with the 160 of the British magazines.

Also available are ASPIDISTRA (an Italian fanzine) and the Washington SF Association Journal No. 33

I am trying to contact the SF Associations of Japan and Argentina. I would be grateful if any member could give me any information on these societies.

If anyone has any queries, protest or whatever, then please feel free to contact me at

7, The Elms,
Stoke,
Plymouth , Devon.

Phil Muldowney.

The Following Ace Titles are available 4s.0d each
Post Free.

LORD KALVAN of Otherwhen by H. Beam Piper.

THE BLACK STAR PASSES by John W. Campbell.

SPACEHOUNDS of IPC by Edward E. Smith.

The Languages of Pao by Jack Vance.

Quest of ~~The~~ Three Worlds by Cordwainer Smith

Fantast(Medway) Ltd, 75 Norfolk Street,
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NEW
COPIES

GENERAL C HUNTERING

— KEN F
SLATER

In a previous but as yet unpublished 'G.C.' I mentioned a number of things which I will have to repeat, if necessary, but as at present I do not know whether that particular G.C. has been printed (I know it has not been published, it may have been prepared for publication to some or other extent) I'll not re-iterate any of it... ..this leaves a few things sort of suspended in space, but not to worry... ..latest titles from Dobson Books are STARCHILD by Frederick Pohl & Jack Williamson, THE GUY EFFECT by Arthur Sellings, and UNDERSEA QUEST by Frederick Pohl & Jack Williamson... ..the first two are 18s. Od each, and the last is 15s. Od... ..also out this month from Dobson, L. Sprague de Camp's AN ELEPHANT FOR ARISTOTLE... ..I've commented on this title some years back, I think, and whilst it is not science fiction it is recommended as of interest to all s-f fans; it fills a sort of gap somewhere... ..newest Belmont pb is THE GATE OF TIME by Philip Jose Farmer, which appears to be an original novel, and is about parallel worlds... ..by the by, there is a very good clue which may help you to a clearer picture of what is happening, in Two Hawk's second paragraph of opening remarks about his story... ..

The future of British s-f in magazines seems very dim. There is a very strong report from two usually reliable sources that the R&V magazines will be at least suspended, if not discontinued. At the same time I have had no word on this from either the editors, the publisher or the distributor. But if they are 'suspended', it means that Britain no longer has any science fiction magazine which is an 'original'

publication, unless ALIEN WORLDS continues publication. Apart from the "freeze-squeeze" I imagine the most direct cause of the discontinuation of the R&V mags was the Thorpe & Porter Ltd. collapse. Currently an offer of 1s. 0d in the pound to redeem their outstanding debts is being made....which is not encouraging to small publishers who were distributing through T&P to a large extent. Incidentally, there is also a story around that one of the 'big' distributors would not handle 'IMPULSE'.....on the grounds that the title was suggestive!

Gold Star Publications Ltd are taking over the distribution of the Galaxy magazines in the U.K., with the first issues being released in January. These will be the American editions, but will have a cover printed in Britain with a number starting from ~~44~~ in each series, and a sterling price. I do not yet have the information on the pricing.... I hoped to go down to London a short time back, and intended to check on this and some other information, but I'd just had a bout of bronchitis and must have tried too hard...I did about 35 miles in something over an hour, and at the end of that time was driving with my eyes crossed and couple of dero pounding my skull with lead hammers. I came back (taking even longer) crawled into bed and didn't wake up for another ten hours. So much for enthusiastic trips to London.... or anyplace.....just recently I don't seem to be able to get more than 25 miles from Wisbech without something intervening and preventing my further travel...don't tell me there has been a story written on that sort of theme... ..I can think of four without bother!

The death of 'Cordwainer Smith', now known to have been Dr. Paul Linebarger of John Hopkins, has been covered in editorials in Galaxy and New Worlds. I can add little to that which has been written; 'Cordwainer Smith' was one of the newer and brighter stars, and I think s-f owes his work a great deal. Perhaps his greatest contribution was in demonstrating the 'poetic' nature of science fiction; so many others have attempted the poet's use of fancy with results that have often rendered the story unintelligible, and the poetry meaningless. In Cordwainer Smith's stories each side of the dual nature of the work aided and supported the other;

not always to everyone's satisfaction, but without either part the tales would have been less complete, less enjoyable; and without these demonstrations by Cordwainer Smith those few who have in their own way attempted similar combinations would not perhaps, have been inspired or encouraged to make the effort.

Conde Nast subscriptions department seems to have been in some sort of trouble recently; of my own knowledge there are subs that were placed nearly six months ago that have not yet been handled, and I've had a few folk who have placed their subs to ANALOG direct consulting me on what they should do. There is only one thing to do - write the agency through which the sub was placed, and ask them to refer it to Conde Nast (if you placed through Conde Nast, then write them, of course). But there is encouraging news - a few of the long delayed subs seem to be creeping thru this month.

Groff Conklin's latest anthology comes from Berkley, at 75¢, title SCIENCE FICTION OFFICIALS..... from Gold Medal a book which looks like a send-up of the super-hero theme.....THE FICKLE FINGER OF FATE by John A. Keel, bannered across the cover with 'A Camp Classic - For Adults Only', it features a hero called 'Satyr-man'....mostly, it is in reading-type words, with an odd picture there and here or somewhere.....Belmont have a reprint of Raymond F. Jones 'THE ALIEN', from the old Galaxy Novels, at 50¢..... Lancer, 50¢ offer TERROR! a selection of 15 tales edited by Larry T. Shaw....ten of the tales are from the fantasy/sf mags, including a couple from Unknown Worlds back in '41, the others are "standard inclusions", like The Horla by Guy de Maupassant..... at 50¢ from Dell, TIME OF THE GREAT FREEZE by Robert Silverberg, which is in their 'Mayflower' series, apparently intended for juveniles....I found it readable, but mostly on the action adventure level.... Belmont again....THE FOUR DAY WEEKEND by George Henry Smith, which is a sort of revolt of the cars; all cars and other vehicles are computerised, and when their control is taken over by some alien castaways, the destruction of mankind seems to be a simple thing.....

TIME BINDING

Moebius Strip.....

By
H. KEN
BULMER

Some time in the wet summer of 1960 I spent a time in Ireland with Walter and Madeleine Willis and during this period Ted Carnell wrote and asked me for an article, desperate, tongue-lolling-in-the-Sahara, must-have-by-return. I wrote the article which is appended to this 1966 article, of sorts. In the event, what with strikes and what-not, the article was not used. Ted Carnell said, in fact: "However, although I promised I would accept it in any case, this particular article is dangerous and inflammable and I just cannot use it."

He also made some more eminently good points, about the danger on continually dissecting sf, and his fear that, soon, because of the editorial matter of NW, we would be killing sf ourselves. Rightly, he said that this he was not prepared to do. He told me that he was cancelling all further criticism of science fiction

And you, there is a lot of awful guff in this thinking of mine; we have gone through an upheaval very similar in outline if not in detail to that I predicted, but much of what I said is still debateable. Very much so.

At the same time as this article was done I sent masses of beautifully-cut stencils to Ken Slater for him to duplicate. He either never received them or threw them out with the laundry bills. I spent a long time making up the magazine - what would have been the next issue of @steam@ - and no one ever saw any of it. But this article bit was business, or supposed to be. In fairness to new readers, I should explain that fandom palled on me very suddenly. I have many and various affections for fandom and it is a background noise without which I could not do. But as a foreground activity it has been relegated through its own in-built faults. And if fandom did not have those faults it would not be fandom as it is.

There must be few people today who would not agree that sf has taken on a new lease of life over the past year or so. The factors which gave this interesting state of affairs to the world are involved; and we may be only in the middle of another boom and bust cycle. The quality of writing of modern sf has, in many places if, lamentably, not in all, markedly improved. We all know Mike Moorcock has printed some horrible rubbish from time to time; but he has also published some remarkably fine work and he has, at the very least summation, invigorated the sf scene with a large injection of stimulants. The tragedy is that NW may not be allowed to settle down to producing a worthwhile body of work now that the labour pains are over.

When reading this article you must bear in mind that much of the then sf scene is still with us; but much has gone. I still argue, for instance, that the fantasy element is the most important for the continuing growth and well being of sf - and much recent widely-praised material merely proves me right - but pure science fiction can, must and will remain a very strong element of our reading material. I speak now as a reader, you understand. I have been unable to read most sf of recent days, mainly because it is unrewarding, but there are a few practitioners around whom I will read with pleasure, one, alas, just the other day dying.

Having said that, I must now make it clear that my ideas on what constitutes acceptable fantasy are changing. At the time of this article I did 'Beyond The Silver Sky' and 'The Map Country' (Land Beyond the Map). These illustrate the way my mind was working (thank you) as, I admit, must also 'Earth's Long Shadow' (No Man's Land) which is a different beastie altogether. Then, with 'The Seventh Stair' I slipped a little further, dimensionally speaking. These grand and swashbuckling otherwhen adventures? I believe, and hope, are still needed and read. But the other fantasy type, the one best exemplified in the short story, must be allowed a truer development than, perhaps, Science Fantasy allowed it. What it boils down to is if you insist on reading science fiction for leisure relaxation and the modern world is full of sf gadgets, admittedly in a half-baked

form, then you must find your kicks in pseudo-science-fiction or para-sf or analog-sf. The inner landscapes of the mind (an inept phrase, as I point out elsewhere. The inner mind is a seascape, not a landscape) contain all the elements of fantasy necessary for enjoyment.

One is rightfully annoyed when, having read a work of imagination, instead of the Victorian end 'It was all a dream!' One is confronted with the modern copy: 'It was all an hallucination!' Big LSD deal.

The sf world has got cold feet. What, it seems to me, has happened is this. We in sf kept prophesying and forecasting and, today, something of what we said might happen has happened. I won't list 'em, you live with 'em. But the modern world is a bewildering place, even to well-balanced personalities. Everything changes so fast that adjustment times are cut and the person is forever chasing reality in a vain effort to catch up and understand what is going on. Science, of course, must answer for this, along with social and economic pressures and the apparent freedom of peoples to think and do what they like. (No one can, of course. The freedoms are illusory.)

So you have the situation of a society hurtling along with all stops out and no one at the wheel. It seems to me that today we're living on the flip side of true culture.

Of course that is an exaggeration. But the grains of truth are there. What some editors want, notably Mike Moorcock, I believe, for their readers is some help in coping with today. They want science fiction writers to take their readers by the hand and lead them on a guided tour of today.

Let me make this clear; great literature must treat of its own times, and because it is great it becomes universal. Someone told me that John Campbell had said at the last London Worldcon that people read Homer for the plot. If this is what John did say, then, again, I disagree with him. Quite apart from its archetypal position in Western Literature, Homer's work stands as a supreme example of everything a good story should have. And if you can read the Greek then you appreciate that much more of the music. The plot is important, of course, but what hinges on the plot is the great glory.

So I believe that most stories must deal with their

own times, and, if they are good enough, they will still be valid in any time. The exceptions are pure entertainment fantasies, of the kind I mentioned earlier. These stand in their own worlds and in their own values; even so, one can still relate them, if one wished, to real life.

So the modern reader baffled by a scientific world who needs a sf writer to guide him through the maze is not an unusual figure and I do not deride either him or his editor. All I suggest is that sf can do more than this; used to do more and will do more again. It is doing more in the work of some writers. So bear in mind, reading the words of six years or so ago, that not everyone is damned.

When Ken Slater wrote asking me for this article (a heartcry that put me in mind of the Carnell cry) I smiled wryly. For the B.SFA, I would probably have pleaded pressure of work (He's hanging by his eyelashes from the space station and she's pouring molten gold down his epiglottis and the...ho hum)) But for Ken Slater I produce. He suggested - and he can cut this is he wishes: 'Bulmer on Ballcock or Moorard Revisited!'

For Ballard I have an intense admiration and an almost equally intense sympathy. If only.... But we must accept what we have. As an obsessional writer he lacks breadth. This does not condemn a man, and, anyway, much of this is debateable or possibly deliberate. It is with his power of imagery that I believe sf is blessed. If only Ballard had the power and breadth of vision and humanity of Brian Aldiss, we would have a genius type in our midst. Ballard is perturbed over the lack of a genius alive today. To repeat that this is the age of the small man would be redundant. The geniuses are perdu. But until Ballard roves out into the area of real human understanding and epeople's affairs, he will never pin on the chevrons of genius rank. But, to forsake his groves of crystals and his deserts and his bathing pools would be to destroy the Ballard that everyone thinks they know. His story

of the examiner and the prisoner chief - (Oh, I know it's not what Cosmic Gosh-wow-science fiction stories would call sf) is a minor classic and indicates the direction he could go if he wished. He is too fond of the banal in emotional story line in his -praiseworthy - attempts at building up his fey atmosphere and of detailing his own obsessions. These are interesting a couple or three times around.

For young writers I believe it far more profitable for them to study Brian Aldiss. He is magnificently brilliant now; but you just wait for it...!

I met Schuyler Miller in the US, and I liked his Cave story on Mars and I reckon he is one of the gentlest and nicest blokes around. He even reviews me favourably, which is a pleasant surprise. But did you see the list he was stuck with in Astounding of the top writers today? Haw haw haw!

I mean - ivory towers are all very well, but how far can you get away from it all? what a revealing line-up of authors that is. Any list of top authors that does not include Brian Aldiss is not genuine.

But enough of this. To the article in question...

The advent of science fiction of the type with which we are all familiar, first popularised by Hugo Gernsback and then polished by John W. Campbell Junior on a mass scale, killed the older scientific romance.

The advent of the sputniks and the first hesitant steps onto the road out to space has killed science fiction.

The above two statements aren't necessarily the whole of the truth in each case; but they are near enough true to form a comfortably basis for an argument.

After all, mathematicians invent symbols the meaning of which they don't know and then calculate out the equations on the basis of their hypothesis and come up with a perfectly truthful and workable answer - having used factors which in themselves may not be absolutely accurate.

The need for this argument in terms of science fiction and fantasy is self-evident. Readers of this form of literature - and the word is used deliberately - know that it is habit forming; like a drug once taken it is not easily or lightly thrown off. And the sources of supply, always thin, sometimes broadening a little in good years, drying up in lean, are today in some danger of being dried up for good.

The sources, that is, that the readers of Science Fiction Adventures look to for continued reading enjoyment.

If, as a reader of science fiction, you have ever tried to pick up an old copy of the work of any of the many authors publishing at the turn of the century and before, you will already know from tired feet and a bruised wallet, that there are very many titles indeed and most are rare and expensive.

Of course, the obvious names spring to mind; Conan Doyle, Haggard, Verne, Wells, Poe and the like. So many cheap editions have been published that the difficulties arise only when rare items are involved. But the great flood of books with a scientific theme went on for many years and the range of subjects is quite astonishing. That the prose is, by the standards of modern slick fiction, very naive and plodding, just doesn't enter the equation. These books tell a story. They invent wonders, they grip the enquiring mind, they force that mind to think along paths hitherto closed; they may be a trifle stilted in dialogue and their ethical standards be detergent-white; but they possess the imperishable quality of spinning a potent magic and of being first-class entertainment in story form. They also, most of them, are beyond the resources of most television studios.

Much of today's science fiction is no longer in the same quality bracket.

The reasons for this aren't difficult to find; and maybe nothing else could have happened. In terms of black and white, sputniks went up and science fiction went down - and out.

All right; it isn't out yet; but the count is perilously near nine.

And many other forces are involved, notably the periodic changes in people's reading habits; science fiction is also a casualty of social change.

A convincing argument can be made out that once people grasped the simple truth that mankind could go out into space, could in the very near future visit other worlds, could bring the mystery of the heavens back and reveal it in cold scientific terms, then the glamour, the romance, the thrill of the exotic, went out of fiction trying to tell the same story.

A convincing argument; but not a hundred percent one. So far only a few hundred weight of metal has been flung off our planet. A few tiny artificial planets circle the sun, a few artificial satellites circle the Earth. No one has yet gone into space, stayed there, and returned. We still have to use titanic amounts of brute force to lift us up through the atmosphere. Our steps into space are at the moment few and faltering. But that has been enough. The lure of the remote, the strange, the wonderful, has gone.

So all right, then. If we admit that the real reason science fiction as a literary form got off the ground at all was because it answered a deep seated need in the human mind to be amazed, to know that forces existed which it could not comprehend, to feel that inexplicable but immediately recognisable thrill of a fresh encounter, then let us admit that. Let us not cloud the issue with profound remarks about extrapolating into the future from known trends. Let us not bother to point with infantile pride to forecasts that have come off and skim over the multitudes which haven't. Let us not bother about trying to drag science fiction up by its bootstraps into a 'respectable' literary form and thereby telling everyone that we think it isn't. Who said science fiction and fantasy weren't respectable in the first place? In all probability the very first story ever told around a campfire at the mouth of a cave was science fiction; that is, the first story as distinct from a mere narrative of what befell Ugh the Hunter during the Mammoth fight. He in the manner of people the world over extrapolated on what he knew to produce a truly fearsome story of what he was going to do to the next Mammoth he tangled with.

Men and women throughout recorded history and before possess the need to be entertained, to hear of great deeds to give them the desire to emulate them - in fact or fancy - to be thrilled and to chill a little at the unknown, so that the familiarity of their everyday life is made warm and safe and reassuring. Those needs are still with us today.

And all the world loves a good story.

Sophistication has just about polished the story out of stories. Science fiction also may have choked over a surfeit of trying to be what it was never intended, light entertainment for polite parlour parties. Entertainment, yes; but entertainment with its basis firmly anchored in the things of life that matter.

So the two threads now are seen to combine. If science fiction of the type we have known is dying, then all that means is that another brand of creating those essentials in story-telling of quality and of dealing with the fundamentals of human life and of lifting the veil onto the unknown, has passed. We merely go on to the next style.

That new type of speculative story may well spring directly from the old scientific romance, with all its glamour and adventure and its continuous presentation of exotic ideas and locales and people - science fiction by any other name would smell just as sweet. If the mundane has crept past the fringes of the atmosphere, has pried into the human mind, has delved past sub-microscopic depths, then sweep it all away. Let us un-ashamedly read stories that are fantasy - well-written, logical, positively motivated, with all the skill of presentation that makes a nineteen sixty story so much easier to read than an eighteen sixty. And let us not lower our sights of quality by a millimetre.

Edgar Rice Burroughs sells today, and is reprinted and reprinted and reprinted. The Magic was there. No matter what the pundits say, the people who read fantasy and science fiction recognise what they are looking for there; so Burroughs continues to sell.

When any human endeavour is lusty, full of life and

MAGAZINE REVIEWS

by

CHRIS PILLST

In retrospect, time always seems to have passed quickly. This effect is even more pronounced when one is involved in a periodic task. For instance, I see in the latest-published edition of VECTOR (no 40) that the last British sf magazines review were IMPULSE 3 and NEW WORLDS 162.

Be content, therefore, if I bring up to date with an abbreviated tour of the highlights of the issues from then.

IMPULSE Nos 4 & 5 contained the concluding episodes in Keith Roberts 'Pavane' stories. The five so far published now build into a novel and not, as first though, a collection of interconnected short stories. The last piece ("Corfe Gate" in IMPULSE 5) is possibly the weakest of the five from the point of view of plot-viability, but with all its richness of colour and attention to detail, it provides a rationale to the series. Taken as a whole, "Pavane" must surely become a classic of modern science fiction. I cannot praise it too highly.

IMPULSE 4 contains several other goodies for the unwary reader: "Hatchetman" by Mack Reynolds is a Mafia-type Western set in the future (if you can imagine such a travesty?); and what must be just the ultimate in concealed-environment stories, "The Superstition" by Angus MacAllister, in which the humans discover they are imprisoned in a (wait for it) cosmic fish and chip shop. Issue 4 also contained "George" by promising newcomer Chris Boyce. When this issue was first reviewed, my co-reviewer Graham Hall said of this story "This is the sort of experimentation that Ballard should be pioneering; a meaningful, intrinsic exploration of writing possibilities. My nomination for the best sf story published this year."

IMPULSE 6 featured Harry Harrison's new novel, "Make Room, Make Room!" This was a great disappointment. It is possibly better read as a detective novel, than as science fiction, though perhaps this is unfair on a novel that at least showed the intention of having something to say about the population explosion. Three other stories in this issue commend themselves: "The Scarlet Lady" (Alistair Bevan) an actively-readable fantasy about a jinx-laden automobile; "The First Last Martyr" (Peter Tate), a piece of pop-art fiction in sick mood; and 'Disengagement' (T.F. Thompson) a piece of pure science fiction horror.

Skipping a couple of issues, Michael Moorcock's latest novel "The Ice Schooner" started in IMPULSE 9. There are many fans of Moorcock's writing, and I am certain that this is going to prove to be one of his most popular novels. As is usual with this author there is a well thought-out plot containing many original images. Couple this with an overall idea that is (for a welcome change) unusually strong, and you have a combination that produces a good novel. My only reservation about it is that some of the writing appears to have been hurried. Also in No. 9 is the latest Hek Belov adventure, "Pasquali's Fearless Puppets" by Edward Mackin. This is one of the best stories in the series. Mackin proves again that sf and humour can be mixed successfully. For a more serious story you could do worse than try Thomas M. Disch's story, "The Roaches"; or "The Eyes of the Blind King". by Brian W. Aldiss.

Now being edited by Keith Roberts and Harry Harrison IMPULSE is already showing an improvement in the quality of the stories and in its overall appearance, IMPULSE 9, in particular, is a most pleasing issue. For the reader who prefers straightforward science fiction, IMPULSE is one of the best places to look.

NEW WORLDS 163 is an unremarkable issue. The serial, "The God Killers" by John Baxter, is a story that is well written throughout, projects a society where both science and religion are anathema (which makes things pretty inconvenient if you think about it) and tells a story that is always credible. This, however, makes everything most unexciting. The complete magazine story; adequate and competent, but nothing more.

"World of Shadows" by S.J. Bounds, in the same issue, is a completely different kind of story. In short, it is a glorious stinkeroo; the kind of b-a-d story that just doesn't seem to be published nowadays. Nevertheless, here it is in all its glory - a piece of camp; well-intended, unpretentious and fabulously hammy. Don't miss it. Another bad-'un, though this time as a direct result of the hack editorial policy of PLANET STORIES, is the reprinted "Stalemate in Time" by Charles L. Harness (NW 165) How this ever found its way into NW I don't know. I don't approve of magazines reprinting stories, particularly bad ones, when there is so much more better stuff coming from newer writers. (For an example of the latter, you might try "The Rodent Laboratory" by Charles Platt in the same issue).

Michael Moorcock's best novelette to date appears in NW 166; "Behold, The Man". This takes a routine sf plot-idea, and gives it a totally non-routine treatment. Briefly, a Jewish time-traveller comes to the Holy Land in the time of Christ to witness the Crucifixion. By an accident he arrives two years too early, and as a result both of his miraculous arrival and his own beliefs and opinions he finds himself playing out the role of Jesus Christ. Taking an agnostic stand on a sacred subject, this story is an excellent blending of up-to-date style and thought.

A final recommendation; try Charles Platt's serial that starts in NW 167. This is "The Garbage World". Perhaps one way of describing this is to say that everything in it stinks. Even the characters walk around with nose-filters. The story itself is an exciting adventure that takes place when the men from Earth arrive to clean up the refuse-world of Kopra. I found the story an amusing and entertaining piece of writing, with enough subtle imagery to satisfy even a scatophile.

Obviously, in a review of this length I can only touch on fragments of the issues in question. Both British magazines, particularly NEW WORLDS, have come in for criticism,...certainly, neither is perfect.

