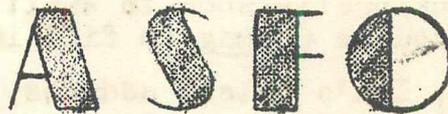


ASFO



TERRY BURKE
'53

unofficial organ
of the Atlanta
Science Fiction
Organization



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-----E D I T O R I A L

Well Ian, as most of you know by now, has succumbed to the lure of neon and tall buildings and has moved to Cleveland. He tells me now he plans to go to N'Yok pretty soon to await the C-bomb. And while he waits, Ian intends to produce Cosmag to fill in the empty moments.

However, Ian's latest address, in case anyone would like to get in touch with him, is:

Ian Macauley
4118 West 143rd St.
Cleveland 11, Ohio

I suppose some excuse should be made for the mimeography in this issue, especially after what Bob Hadle said in FUTURE about the 2nd issue. Among other difficulties, there's the fact that I had never seen a mimeograph in action before, much less worked one myself. This issue is being run on a small Sears-Roebuck mimeo which once belonged to Henry Burwell (and which neither he nor Ian could get to work satisfactorily). Actually, Carson and I are kinda proud of having done as well as we have with a mimeo that licked both super-editors Burwell and Macauley. Of course some of the pages are pretty bad, but these were mostly done before we discovered that the ink, no matter how generously applied, couldn't struggle through that clogged-up pad. Generally, though, most of the pages don't look too bad, and I think we'll improve with experience.

Might as well say a word or two about ASFO's policy for those who worry about fanzine policies. Ian's previous policy will be retained to a certain extent. That is, ASFO will continue to use fan-type articles (when they're good) and Guthrie cartoons (when we can get 'em). However, I also want articles dealing more with science fiction and fantasy. Regular columns will be limited to "Nods & Becks" for a while I think, unless we can get something very unusual. "The Immortal Teacup" will continue in ASFO, I hope, as soon as Walt Willis gets his material collected and ordered the way he wants it.

And fiction. There was general approval of Ian's decision to exclude fiction from ASFO---but after comparing several zines which don't use it with some that do, I've decided the majority can be wrong. Fact, I'm going to cut out this business of counting votes altogether. All of it is sheer nonsense anyway---how the heck can you please anybody with such a scheme as figuring out the average likes and dislikes of a readership? So---tell you what: If you'll just tell me the kind of improvements you think I could make in ASFO, I'll try to please you individually rather collectively---as long as I can please myself at the same time.

Anyway, I'll bet no one will dislike "The Tonal Analyzer". This is not fan-fiction, by the way. I'd like to make it clear to those who might contribute fiction to ASFO that I won't even consider fan-fiction. I realize even Prozines publish fan-fiction nowadays and some of it is good fiction, but I think it has been run into the ground. There may be some difficulty about definition here, so, for the purpose of ASFO policy, I will define fan-fiction as stories depending for full effect on

preknowledge of fan-personalities or events.

Our hard-cover edition of THE IMMORTAL STORM has been delayed for a bit by various and sundry of Fate's devious snares. However, the book will definitely be mailed some time in November. The delays have served some good purpose, anyway, in that we have been able to take our time planning the format and so on, and if I must say it myself I think we've done a pretty good job.

One thing we've found out---publishing a hard-cover book is not the sort of thing one does just to while away the idle moments. It is a wee bit more complicated (and expensive) process than we had thought. But at least it isn't impossible, and we're going to feel a real sense of accomplishment when we hold THE IMMORTAL STORM in our hands.

If you're interested in the book, by the way, I'd like to ask that you send us your order now. I know no one likes to put out money with no immediate tangible return, even when there's a saving thereby. But, believe me, you'll be doing us a big favor. After all, we're knocking a dollar off the price for those who will send in their orders before October 10, so you can get the book now for \$3.95. If every one of you now reading this editorial were to order a copy of the book, we'd be able to make some improvements which otherwise we'll never be able to make. Naturally we're not relying on such an unlikely occurrence.

Of course, THE IMMORTAL STORM is easily worth five dollars just as it is, but we're determined to produce a book that fandom will be hard put to it to beat. Or maybe we've already done that. Maybe you don't know it, but the IMMORTAL STORM is the only authentic history of fandom yet written, and probably the only one ever to be written because Sam Moskowitz is the only man who could write with absolute certainty about early fandom. The book will contain photographs from the files of Sam Moskowitz and Bob Madle; and, by gum, we've commissioned Frank R. Paul to draw the dust-jacket. I'd like to see fandom beat a deal like that in a big hurry.

We've been getting some pretty good fanzines lately. Ed Wood's Journal of Science Fiction, in its final appearance, is by all means the best. We're very sorry to see this one go. This issue contains ---in addition to some very fine articles and the 1952 mag index--- 30 photographs taken at the Chicon. You may still be able to get it for 50¢ from Ed Wood, 1331 W. Newport Ave., Chicago 13, Ill. # Lyle Kessler, 2450-76 Avenue, Philadelphia 38, Penna., sent us the first issue of Fan-Warp, very good, multilithed zine. # One of my favorite amateur (or "hobbyist", if you insist, Mr. Smith) journals is K. K. Smith's Achronic Chronicle (Route 1, Box 92, Everett, Washington). This one isn't concerned with fandom, but Mr. Smith writes very good articles on political, financial and general interest subjects. Subscriptions: \$1 a year. # Lighter material in Psychotic (Richard E. Geis, 2631 N. Mississippi, Portland 12, Oregon--10¢ each); and Vega which ambitiously claims to be "Fandom's Leading Monthly" (Joel Nydahl, 119 S. Front St., Marquette, Mich.)

(continued on page 11)

THE TONAL ANALYZER

If human hearing were perfect
piano-tuners would have their
work cut out for them.

by
Fred Chappell

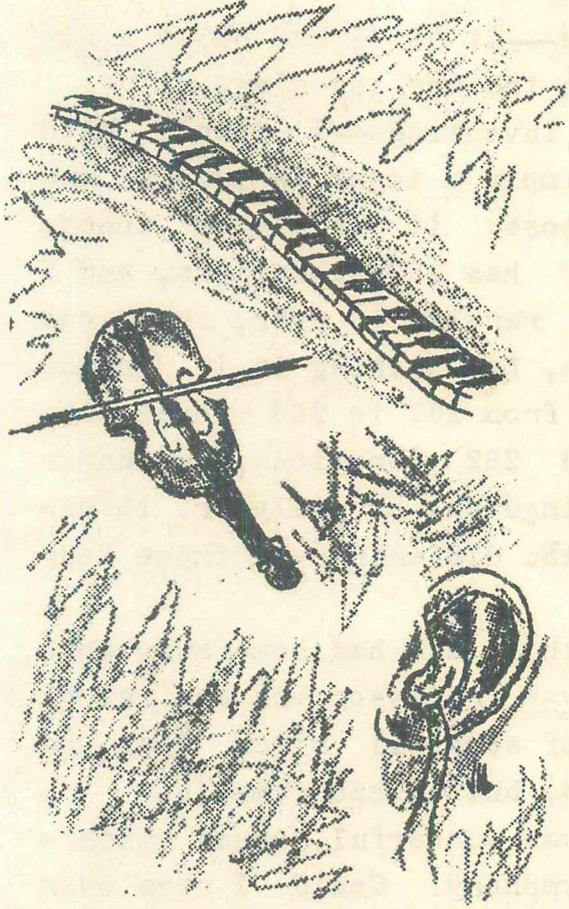
WHEN YOU'VE WORKED on a machine, especially if it's one of your own inventions, when you've sat up long sleepless nights nursing it to health, when you've cussed it, kicked it, and at times almost kissed it, it is a very personal hunk of metal. It seems to be a part of you. You take pride in its achievements, feel blue when it fails. Indeed, inventing is a very human process.

I don't usually sound so philosophical, but I feel that I ought to give my fellow scientists a reason for letting a personal friend of mine use the machine before I presented it to the scientific world—and, too, this is a story I like to tell. Sometimes I tell it a little too often, I guess, but that's because I think it's a darned good story.

I went to Walton College. That's a little Hayseed Southern college in South Carolina. I know all my Harvard, Columbia and Yale friends would sneer at it, but I like it—after all, it is my old alma mater. Well, I met Professor von Groffe there. He taught music in the little one-room department that was provided.

It was not that I was overly fond of music, nor that I was a good student—far from it. I took music the first year to fill out my schedule. I figured it was better than taking philosophy—or home economics. Of course the only thing I was really interested in was electrical engineering.

But after the first year, I took it willingly. Not, as I



said before, because I was a good student—hardly that—but I liked the Professor. He was really a character. He was short, slightly paunchy, and had a very large nose. He was near-sighted, but he refused to buy or wear glasses. Sometimes he would stop his lecture on Bach, or Handel, or someone else; he would look out the window where the warm South Carolina sun was pouring down and say, "Ach! It iss so beautiful. Go out and find out what these great men wrote music about." And then and there he would dismiss class and everyone would troop joyfully out

and loll about in that sunshine. Is it any wonder I liked him?

He liked me too—but for what reason I'll never know. He often asked me to his apartment for dinner or a Sunday luncheon and lecture to me on my failings in class, or the austere beauty of Bach, or some such. His wife, very fat and always beaming, set a table that would make a satiated man feel starved. Both he and his wife had come to America from Germany before World War II, and settled down permanently in this little South Carolina town.

That caused Professor von Groffe's only big ambition—he wanted to go to New York. He often said to me, "Ach! New York—dot iss the place! Carnegie Hall with concerts every night. The recording stations. Around here—no concerts."

I usually laughed and told him of course he'd go, but I didn't believe it—and soon after I moved here myself.

I'd about forgotten the Professor until that night when he called me over the telephone. I was feeling pretty good. My

ASFO

invention was humming along nicely—it still had quite a few bugs in it, but at least it was in the working stage.

I'd better tell you about my invention—I didn't know what to name it, so I called it simply a tonal analyzer. And that briefly sums up its purpose: it analyzes tones. Theoretically, the note middle C has 256 vibrations, and C sharp has 267 vibrations. This rarely, if ever, comes out other than theoretically, though, for nothing is in perfect tune, and a player's C may range from 257 to 266 vibrations. You can tell if it's sharper than 262 vibrations, but under that the unaided ear can not distinguish. My analyzer, therefore, made it possible to hear the difference of those four or five undetectable vibrations.

I had just finished working with it and had come away erll pleased when my phone rang. It was Professor von Groffe. He had just realized some money out of some old stock that he owned. He had thought it worthless, but it had come in.

He was very excited. New York was vunderful, chust vunderful. He had tickets to the NBC Symphony. Could I come over tonight and hear it with him? It would be the first time he had heard "live" music in many years. He wanted me to hear it with him. I consented readily. The tonal analyzer was coming along nicely at the time and I needed a rest anyhow.

I took a bath, shaved and dressed. Then, as a last moment impulse, I grabbed the analyzer off the table and stuck it in my coat pocket. It wasn't very large—in fact, it looked very much like a hearing aid, with ear receiver and all.

I met the Professor at his hotel and we went to the concert hall together. He talked rapicly and much. I listened attentively, not so much to what he was saying, but to his voice which brought back memories of my college days.

When we got to the hall, he was as impatient as a child till the concert started, then he became rapturously quiet. "Chust think," he said after the first piece, "I have seen Toscanini conduct Ravel!"

The whole concert was like that. The last number came up.

I handed the analyzer to the Professor and said, "Here, wear this." He put the receiver in his ear without answering, but I knew he was puzzled. I fiddled with the dials a moment and finally got it set. Then the orchestra began something by Beethoven. The Professor listened for a moment with an expression of puzzlement. This expression was soon replaced by one of disgust and horror. He tore the receiver away from his ear. "Let's get out of here," he said.

I rose, much bewildered, and followed him out.

Outside he asked me, "And thust what is the purpose of this infernal machine?"

I was very puzzled and no little embarassed. I started explaining it to him, but he interrupted me.

"This machine iss no goot," he said. "It destroys music. With it, I hear nothing but horrible noice. It iss a choke, maybe?"

Then it dawned on me. He had heard many instrumentants playing a chord, but with my machine it would be a cacaphony, because they could never be perfectly in tune. The chords the Professor heard could be likened to the chords produced by hitting a piano keyboard with a baseball bat.

I started to explain, but he interrupted again. "It iss no goot. Even now while you are talking, your voice ranges so much that I cannot make head or tail of it. This machine destroys music. It iss bad—you should get rid of it, yess?" He had turned it on again.

I became silent. There was nothing more I could say.

Then his expression changed—from one of extreme irritability to one ethereal—almost ecstatic.

"Mein Gott!" he cried. "Dot music! Where does it come from? It iss vunderful! It iss the most beautiful music I haff efer heard! Where comes it?"

I listened intently. I could hear no music.

He looked about him and finally he realized.

"The wind! Mein Gott! It iss the wind!"

THOUGHTS ON

by William Batterson

FANTASY

Anybody know who William Batterson is? This article was among some I had, and Ian couldn't tell me anything about the author. Anyway, it's a pretty good article. I don't agree, however, that fantasy writers should streamline their product further. Keeping up with the Joneses may be a good old American custom, but its advisability depends on whether the Joneses are better off than you are.

jb

THE FANTASY FIELD has a limited audience, certainly, since it caters mainly to those who are fortunate enough to have retained the imagination that they were born with and which had such an important place in their childhoods. For in a way, growing up is a cruel sensation. As the average person adds years, so he usually gains doubts which evolve into cynicisms and disappointments which eventually become suspicions. As a result one becomes realistic enough to plod along until finally solaced by death, having missed many of life's pleasures while preoccupied with its agonies. However, if one is by some chance spared his vitality of mind and is able to escape a complete seduction by realism, there are untold delights that he may find within his imagination when all else fails. He need never be bored with the world or lonely without it, for his mind becomes his refuge and amusement in times of necessity.

It is for that reason that a person given over to realism almost completely, as too many are, cannot become a fantasy fan in the genuine sense of the word. When he reads a Lovecraftian description of some eery monster rising out of a misty chamber to plague the world, he is at first surprised that he received a touch of fear from the tale and then disgusted with himself. He

finally concludes, mistakenly, that the story is meant to frighten children and old women and is hardly worth the time of a mature, alert mentality.

Some varieties of fantasy, of course, have been very widely perused and enjoyed. One could naturally expect Thorne Smith's humorous tales of the supernatural to have a large following. He had one of the smoothest, easiest styles to come out of the twentieth century and his topics were chosen so as to coincide with the hidden yearnings of the millions of frustrated men and women who dominate our civilization. Smith reveled in the don't-give-a-damn attitude and the idea that when a man wants a drink or a woman, or both, he should heed his whim rather than hide it under the sanctimonious cloak of so-called respectability.

It is deplorable yet true that our masters of horror never seem to get the same amount of acclamation as their more light-hearted literary brothers. Even the genius of Edgar Allen Poe was not fully recognized until long after his death. Ambrose Beirce's works met the same destiny, and H. P. Lovecraft is still unknown to the majority of readers, even though he has been dead for more than a decade. Neither has Oliver Onions received the acclaim that should be his by rights. Just as Poe led the world in the creation of the detective story, so Onions helped to popularize the modern psychological study in "The Beckoning Fair One". It seems ideally suited to dramatization, since it contains everything that anyone, whether actor, director, or audience, could want in such a tale.

This custom of tardy recognition brings a definite danger into the fantasy field, and it is partly self-imposed. English is a growing, everspreading language, still young in comparison to such forms of speech as German or French. Every year brings both new words and advances toward purification of our language. French has long since passed through this stage of development and is now practically stationary as far as change is concerned. French writers of today construct their sentences and measure their phrases in virtually the same way their forefathers did a century ago, perhaps omitting some of the more florid, verbose traits. Innovations are rare, and even looked upon with distaste by the great majority

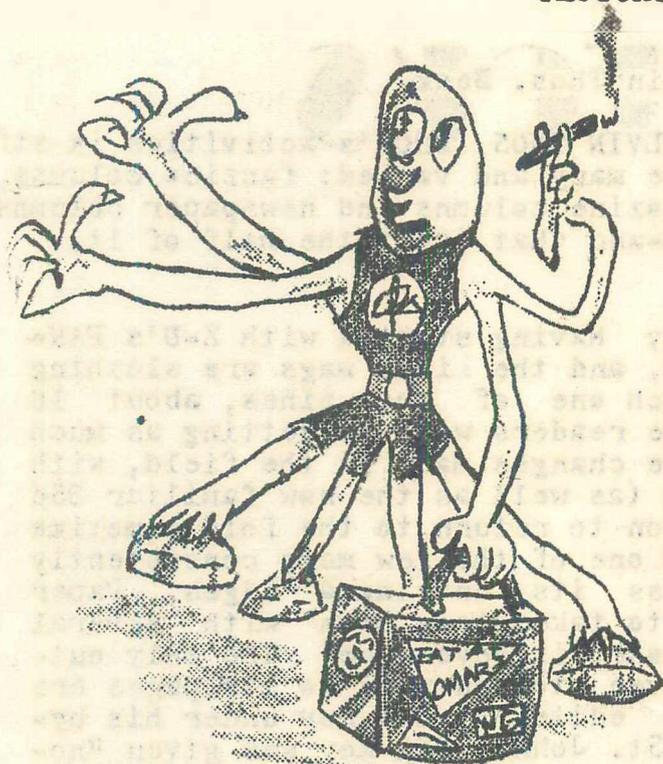
of the French reading public.

The United States and England have made immense changes, mostly because of the youth of their language. A hundred years ago, an author in English could let his sentences run into extremely long, complicated things, paragraph after paragraph, without suffering rebuke; on the contrary, he was often admired for it, as in the case of Lord Chesterfield. Now things are changed. In most types of fiction, the long-winded writer finds it increasingly difficult to find an audience and the reason is clear. Although more people read for enjoyment than ever before, as a whole they have less time than the readers of a century ago. Under the circumstances they naturally look to the author who is concise without being abrupt and clear without displaying childishness. Although any surviving admirers of Victorianism abhor the idea, it is obviously silly to use ten long, complex sentences to describe something that could be sufficiently covered in two, or better still, partly left to the imagination to work out.

This brings us to the principal fault of many modern day authors of horror stories. Whether consciously or not, many writers tend to emulate too greatly the masters of the past. They do not seem to realize that even Poe, were he living today, would have to alter much of his work in order to be published in a modern day magazine; many of his sentences would be shortened, and much of his work condensed. Many authors defend their loquacity by claiming that their complicated technique is necessary to create atmosphere; that to present a haunted castle, for instance, in the intended light, it must be described in detail. The theory is apparently wrong, since it has been disproved many times over in the straight fiction world. If Earnest Hemingway can be taciturn while describing the horrors of a battle and present the agonies of the combatants in such a vivid manner as to make the reader virtually hear the explosions or feel the pain of a shattered kneecap, then a fantasy writer could certainly be able to present his story, replete with intended horror, without the use of frilly, entangled sentences. This technique only makes the reader realize that the job of writing is a hard one. It also destroys most of the enjoy-

THOUGHTS ON FANTASY

Eleven



ment that one receives from reading for pleasure. When an author makes a reader feel that writing well is a simple task, a job anyone can do, he has succeeded in one of the most important parts of his work.

As a counter-argument to all this it might be pointed out that writing styles, just as dress styles, occur in cycles and that what was popular yesterday might become popular again. That may be; but it does not alter the fact that to be successful a writer must create for the present and not for the remote future.

Therefore, in order to gain deserved recognition as a distinct, highly resourceful field, fantasy writers must learn either to follow the style trends of straight literature or else create a new trend. Great as the works of the past masters are, the world does not need or want any more emulations of their writing styles and thoughts. Fantasy writers have a habit of saying that their field gives more of an outlet to imagination than any other; but since biographers claim that truth is stranger than fiction, and novelists call for a mixture of both, it is all very much like an argument on religion. Nevertheless, if the lore of the weird is to advance as an art, it must alter its techniques. The possibilities are certainly there and so is the necessity. It is now up to the advocates.

Editorial (continued from page three)

Coming up in the next issue, if I can squeeze it in, is a 3,000 word short fantasy by Jimmy Streinz. Also a couple of articles by Paul Mittelbuscher and Terry Carr, and a something by Fred Chappell.

The next issue of ASFO will probably be late, too. But we're not going on a quarterly schedule---we'll try to make up the lost issue early next year, if possible.

Jerry

NOODS

by Calvin Thos. Beck

CALVIN THOS. BECK's activities in sf are many and varied: fanzine columns, prezine columns and newspaper columns —and that isn't the half of it.

PAPER CUTS ARE NOW UNDERWAY, already having started with Z-D's FAN-TASTIC; will continue with AMAZING, and the Mines mags are slashing their bulk down to 130 pages for each one of the zines, about 16 pages each; although they claim the readers will be getting as much reading as before. Among some of the changes made in the field, with WEIRD taking to the digest size (as well as the new familiar 35¢ price, darn it!), old F.F.M. is soon to return to the fold sometime in fall or late in '53—probably one of the few mags consistently on the quality scale for years, bless its untrinned edges. Paper cuts and changes have been rumored to take place soon with several other SF mags, tho' how it can be done, is beyond me. The only outfit not to make any changes, and even to add more to its pages are the John Raymond mags, previously edited by del Rey under his by-lines of Wade Kaempfert and Philip St. John. Del Rey was given "notice" during the 2nd week of July, and from here on (excepting FAN-TASY FICTION) ROCKET, S.F.ADVENTURES, and SPACE will be run by former fan, Harry Harrison. And if you want a picture of Harrison, look on the front cover of the Sept., '53 ROCKET—he's the "spaceman" held unconscious in the arms of another spaceman. Harry posed for the pic. Also, a steady fan column will be featured in each issue of ROCKET regarding mostly fanzines. The first one, in the Nov. issue, will be run by Bob Silverberg. Each different column will alternate in the hands of a different fanmag editor...something new and worthwhile in promags for a change—and about time. A fan dept. will also run in S.F.ADVENTURES or SPACE around early '54, tho' this matter hasn't been fully settled yet. And another SF mag is being contemplated by publisher Raymond, making a total of five from those quarters. Anyway, there will now be only one SPACE henceforth, ending the confusion with the now defunct Mines mag.

It's now settled that '54's convention won't go to Frisco and very unlikely anywhere on the W. coast. The Little Men have just about folded their club, if it hasn't happened by now. Their noteworthy slick fanmag, RHODOMAGNETIC DIGEST, is also suspended, their current issue now making the rounds the last to be published.

For a number of reasons, the annual conventions are now too big for one place to handle. It's been suggested and approved by many fans that the Annual World Con be declared a sort of unofficial holiday, and that several sites run it cross-country simultaneously. Probably not more than 600 people at the most would attend each site if the world con were successfully divided; certainly far better

than a maddening crush of 1,500 to 2,000 at a time. No one can call it fun at that rate. And according to figures, attendance records should average from at least 2,000 in '54; 3,000 in '55; to more than 4,000 or 4,500 in '56. That is, if the con's continue meeting in one place at a time. Liking them all as much as I do, despite their drawbacks, they will be unmanagable from now on—as of last year's Chicon you will remember. No doubt a good vehicle for book, magazine, and publishing houses to peddle their wares, for that's all the cons will be at the present rate—namely: fashion salons for the professionals.. (“Get away you damn fans; can't you see we're conducting serious business?” Signs of Things to Come.) Does any fan enjoy looking forward to that? If the pros in StFantasydom wish their own conventions and show-places, they are in a better position to do so without 100% fan-support. It's wise to remember that the world cons originally were started by fandom and that the pros were the guests at these doings. Now it's quite the other way around. Fans are not only being “tolerated” as guests—pretty soon fans will only be privileged guests. In short, wither divide up the world conventions so that several cities, in different locations across the U.S.A., share and administrate over them, and by so doing let both fans and pros enjoy and participate in them fairly, or else ...let's forget about world cons entirely, giving them into the hands of prodom, and let fans construct more and more regional, or local-type conventions than ever in the future. For sure, the Chicon proved it wasn't the fans' con any longer. The Philcon should prove it even more strongly.

Don't get me wrong. Just like the fans, the pros deserve as much for themselves by having their own affairs. However, it should be clear that one phase of the StFantasy field shouldn't overlap the other, lower its power, right to stand up and out, or reduce it to a frazzle.

In re: the promag field again.—S.F.PLUS is now having quite some trouble in supporting itself, having “unofficially” fallen into a bimonthly status already, and probably losing a month now and then in the future, unless circulation starts picking up. The sages have been wagging their heads seeing a quick suspension of PLUS soon..... And in the “defunct department”, this column scores 100% in knowing of the suspension of MYSTERIOUS TRAVELLER, Gibson's FANTASTIC FICTION and a hunch on Mines' SPACE months before it happened. Sneaking in a little preview note on things to come: the success and rise of SF mags will occur in cycles. According to the number of films from H'wood coming through, and TV or radio shows, of a StFantasy format, will the various SF mags be able to sell. If H'wood ever began puckering up, with thumbs down on SF movies, and SF on TV or radio continued at their present slow rate, we can anticipate a big fall in the promag business. The more SF over radio, TV and from H'wood, the longer will the mags live and more we'll see of so-called “new ones” around. Science and H-bombs? ~~Hmmm~~...well, maybe they too can help a bit. But still, you can't beat the three giants of entertainment and communication today: AM, TV and H'wood! They influence industries—people—the whole country...though sometimes too darn leucisly, unfortunately.

And this column still sticks close to its statement that SF mags will begin their decline in the late winter or early spring of '64...unless the fantasy field comes to the rescue and saves what is now hack, diluted, stereo'd, and formulated "pure" science fiction. Probably fantasy will: witness the snap change of WEIRD in its new dress and layout—or the sharp success and loud shouts of near-hysterical joy erstwhile editor del Rey's FANTASY has brought from fandom. If it hasn't been about the spitting image of old UNKNOWN, we'd like to know what else of Earth could be!...On the other hand, as has been said, AM-TV-H'wood may come to the rescue so that SF publishers continue reaping bonanzas for the next few years. So far, looking at the record, no SF film has brought any hair readings, cries of anguish and downfallen expressions from the movie moguls who've StFed around in the last 3 years—only contented smiles and fat purses can be found in their direction. Remember when the last SF-horror-fantasy movie "boom" occurred in the late thirties until '41 or '42? Up jumped whole groups of sf-horror-fantasy mags almost overnight back in those days, some of them pretty stinko, too. Out the window into the garbage can some eight or a dozen went—~~not~~ due entirely to the "war", but mostly due to scant or no SF on radio or from H'wood. I still think that radio had about ten times as much fantasy-SF during the thirties than it's had in the last five or so years combined.

In the drive to combat Moskow's minions, neo-nazis are beginning to find a foothold in various governments and nations again, under the pretext of "fighting communism". Naturally, as it was during the last war, the Vaticanites and organized leaders of the alleged "Church" are once more behind this fascist drive, their latest move being to discredit world Protestantism and non-Catholicism as much as possible just as they tried in Europe. I think McCarthy, so-called "American Senator" from Wisconsin, and his retinue of hate-mongers and exaggerators are probably the best example in our country. If this nation submerges under their rule some day, then it really wouldn't have mattered whether or not communism or fascism did take over the powers of this country. Between Russia's crew and neo-fascism, it looks as if all of us are 'tween ye old devil and a deep black pit. Seems like somebody had best start thinking of something else fast before it's too late, for maybe soon columns like this may not be around any more. "1984", or Dachau and Buchenwald, here we come(?)!*

Fans and collectors take notice!—U. S. editions of sfantasy have been reprinted in England, for about a year or more now, at a large rate, and accordingly many items which have been totally out

*Got to stick my oar in for just one comment: I agree in part with the above. Russian or Vatican rule would make things a mite trying for us non-communists, non-Catholics. But I would go a bit further. So long as the reins of power in this allegedly democratic country are in the hands of any single group—be they communist or capitalist, Catholic or Protestant, or what have you—members of opposing factions will have a tough time. Crying "People, Awake!" to the non-fascists will do little good, because your shouts may be loud enough to rouse the fascists themselves. Which way to the bomb-shelter? jb

of print are again available, usually for about half or less of their original American book list-prices. Barring a serious setback or a war, all former U.S. sf/fantasy books should be reprinted within another two years if the present large volume of publishing in England continues. We've received some score of these books already, and indeed they are handier and far trimmer than their former American counterparts. Prices range from as low as 80¢ to an average of \$1.50. However, editions are more limited than those published here, such as those by large outfits like Simon & Shuster, Doubleday, or Scribner's; therefore, the collector-reader would be smart to contact a British dealer as soon as possible. Many original British sf/fantasies are also available besides the U. S. reprints, and of what I've seen of the former and later, I recommend them not only as a terrific buy but as excellent publishing jobs as well. Also, complete paper-backed editions (not to be printed in the U. S.) of former famous U. S. sf titles are available, averaging 25¢ to not more than 35¢, by the Cherry Tree Novel press. Some of the titles being: Wollheim's anthology, "Flight Into Space"; Long's "John Carstairs, Space Detective"; Friends "The Kid From Mars"; Leinster's "The Last Space Ship"; and others already published or forthcoming. They are, of course, bigger than average U.S. pocket-paper editions. And also, among many of the British paper-backs coming out, the entire Burroughs series of Tarzan, Marstories, and Pellucidar, etc., are being made possible by W. H. Allen ("sole distributors") of London, for about 80¢ per title.

One of our correspondents informs me that Ray Palmer has sold out Clark Publishing Co., and a direct letter from RAP, in Fantasy Times verifies this as being so. However, RAP's letter seems about as clear as mud in some spots on whether O.W. is or is not to continue* and what the situation will be about FATE, heretofore edited by him under the pseudo' of "Robt. N. Webster". The new mag under the Palmer hand has already been received by me and most other O.W. subscribers, entitled SCIENCE STORIES. First class "book type" paper is used, and it's 130 pages in length, with a cover by Bok, interiors by Bok, Becker, Hornstein, St. John, Burdoff and Pierce. The Best known writers for the "first issue" are Jack Williamson, Robt. Moore Williams and Rog Phillips; unfortunately, except maybe for Byrne or Mack Reynolds, the next issue is of the standards of former O.W.'s. Our source also informs us that the new Chicago mag, UNIVERSE, has also been bought by RAP. The whole outfit operated by RAP is called Bell Publications, Inc.

Among mags making changes, the Lowndes 'zines have chopped off 32 pages from DYNAMIC & S.F. QUARTERLY, tho' no further moves to change any of the features, depts., or other columns will be made. Neither any foreseeable cuts or changes have been announced by the Gold mags or J. W. Campbell's quarters, aside of a 10 page drop in the latter. But nowadays no one can tell from one moment to the next what will happen, of course...The Mines mags are down to 130 pages, as we know and FANTASTIC STORY MAG will be quarterly henceforth. F.F.M. intends to be revived later this year, as we've already stated...And that wraps up news of the pro-mags for now...except that several of our

*It isn't. The monthly O.W. has been displaced by two bimonthlies...jb

(continued on page 19)

BUILT-IN REACTION

by Russell K. Watkins

RUSS WATKINS is of course well-known as editor of The Imaginative Collector and as organizer of the "Campaign to Clean Up Fandom". At present, due to military commitments, his fan activities are limited. As to this article, well, personally I wish I could not only ignore television but could avoid it entirely. Still, this may be the start of a new fan-industry.

I'VE GOT A SMALL BONE TO PICK with fanzine columnists and editors. They've been kicking a good thing in the mouth for several years now and it's got to stop. They've been doing it out of sheer jealousy or ignorance, either of which is inexcusable.

Here's the scoop: fanzine eds and columnists are ignoring TV. Why this should be I don't know. TV offers many topics for discussion for fans and not only topics but suggests methods by which fanzines may be improved. The latter is the subject for discussion in this article. You know these filmed comedy shows on TV with their built-in laughter? Take the Ozzie Nelson show for example. It's on film and made (I presume) in a studio with no audience around. Well, the producer whose genius is surpassed only by his self-esteem, feels that if there was an audience around that there would be great whooping and hollering throughout.

He also feels that in fairness to his genius he should be allowed to make up for that little defect. He does so by dubbing in laughter that he has borrowed from the sound track of a show which did have an audience. Meanwhile he regulates the volume making it loud for poor jokes and low for good jokes. When the person at home sees the finished product he is supposed to get the impression that Ozzie Nelson is the funniest man in the world. Otherwise why would there be all that whopping and hollering every time he opens his mouth?

Now here's my idea; this will cause a complete revolution in the field of fanzines. Latch onto this, editors, it's the new up-and-coming thing! Be the first to cash in, you'll be the rage of fandom.

As I've explained above, the laughter is faked in on some TV programs. Here's the point: every viewer likes to identify himself with a group. In other words he enjoys laughing more when doing it in company of that fake audience. Now I believe in this viewpoint and I'm heartily in favor of fanzines adopting the same scheme. Only on a much broader plane.

Now take the editorial in most fanzines. It is deathless prose apparently written in the utter loneliness of the editor's ivory tower. Deep down that loneliness grieves him. Like the TV producer he knows that his work is great and that if there was an audience peeking over his shoulder that they would be drooling praise all down his shirt front. Heretofore, there's been nothing he could do about it. Now, with the TV boys having set the precedent, he can remedy the whole business by dubbing in the audience reaction. Likewise, the poor unappreciated columnist can fix up the built-in reaction. For example, here's your favorite fanzine columnist with his column written under the new order:

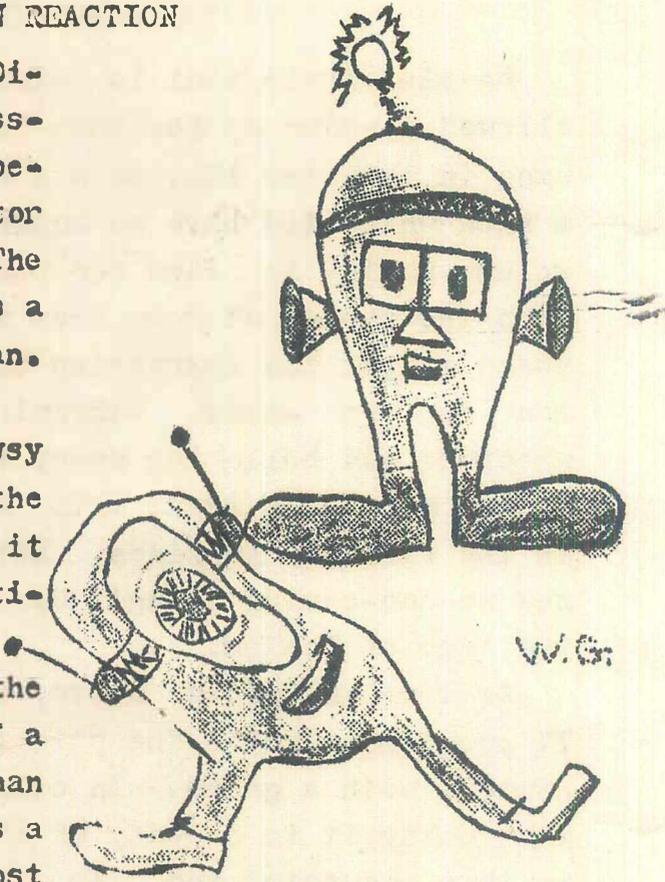
"New fantasy mag to be edited by Gold. (Gee whiz! Another pro mag?) Hugo Gernsback returns with field's 1st slick. (Holy smoke!) (And rah rah!) Bradbury sticks his nose in politics. (Great day! What is Mars coming to?) Space SF is going monthly. (Whewwwww!) Bob Tucker is a pen name for Donald

Wollheim. (Jeepers!) Writers' Digest will feature an all stf issue devoted only to stf. (Unbelievable!) Who will be the editor of the next new fanzine? (The suspense is killing me!) He is a familiar local figure, an ex-fan. (You devil, you.)"

See what I mean? A nice newsy column to begin with but the built-in reactions really set it off. Allows the reader to identify himself with a group.

Now to humorous writers the scheme should be even more of a boon as they are more subtle than editors and columnists, and as a consequence many of their most luscious pearls are wasted upon our more swinish readers. They could remedy that waste by doctoring up their works with the "Watkins Built-In Reaction" method.

In case any fans need aid I am going into the specialized business of building in the typical fan reactions. As you know I'm a typical and regular fan and thus judge myself an expert in this matter. Just send in your manuscript and I'll be more than delighted to add the reactions to it that it may be doubly enjoyed by fandom. There's just a slight fee of 2¢ per reaction. Don't let this slight cost deter you though, for you can't realize how popular this new order of writing will make you. I am publishing a booklet for 50¢ entitled: "How to Provide Built-In Reactions to Your Manuscript". It is ably illustrated by Lee Hoffman's "Little Peepel" in appropriate positions and attitudes of reaction. Just write to: FAN-AIDS INC., 115 W. 34th St., Savannah, Georgia.

/-adv-/


sources have inferred that the recent SF mag splurge in the Chicago area is part of a move to bring that city back into the mag business as a secondary leader, at least, in the U.S.; that the rumor, so far unconfirmed, is that the RAP and Hamling mags are actually subsidiaries of Ziff-Davis, and have been so since Z-D moved its editorial-executive offices out of Chi' into NYC.

I never thought we'd see the day when we'd be paying 35¢ for 120 to 130 page pocket SF mags, or what would generally correspond to about 96 pages in the usual "pulp size". "Paper costs"? Hah! The cost of living surely isn't 250% to 300% more than it was in 1940; is it? Then we were buying for 10¢ or 15¢ at the most, mags with from 110 to about 140 pages. I know I'm paying 80¢ or 85¢ for what was once a 40¢ can of coffee; 5¢ for what once was a 2¢ or 3¢ newspaper; and 21¢ or 22¢ for what formerly was a 10¢ or 11¢ container of milk. I can just as easily run through a thousand and one other articles, but this should serve as an example for the moment. Albeit, I'm not paying 3 or 4 times as much for anything as what it was in '40; but I am, on the other hand, doing just that when buying an SF mag—probably an average of at least 4 to 5 times as much! Can some one explain this?

Some Rambling and Roving 'fore we end—Bok's artwork, which has recently appeared on the covers or interiors of such mags as FANTASY FICTION and others, was done years back and has been decorating his walls only. He hasn't done artwork for 2 years or more, nor intends to ever again after his back-log is used up, though all his work is returned to him after it's used through a prearranged agreement between him and the editor. However, he's soon returning to SF again as novelist and story writer...Reason we don't see as much of Finlay as we should is that he's become one of the most expensive artists in the field to hire...Fans recently have betted that, at the Philcon, Hans Stefan Santesson will again be voted officially, or unofficially, the Most Unpopular Man of the year in the field...Vick recently was attacked by Polio—reason for not answering his mail. This disease is no fun. Why not write him a cheer-up note?

*EDITORIAL NOTE: Later info received from Cal after the above was stencilled. Lester del Rey has returned to publisher Raymond to edit FANTASY FICTION. Harry Harrison will probably keep the other mags. Harrison, by the way, is a personal friend of Bok, and is the source of information regarding him.

The rumor about RAP and Hamling is strictly rumor.

Cal himself, as I indicated in the blurb, isn't exactly vegetating. He tells me: "...I've got several offers of being with several different publications—not ALL at one time, thank goodness! That'd be impossible, and besides, I'll only try settling for the job I can get bestest with the mostest. Then, too, book reviews (stf of course) will be handled by me for various promags, and I hope one of these review jobs will click soon either with the N.Y. Times or Herald Tribune in their Sunday sections."

Finally, Cal says he has a "good as new" mimeograph for which he has no further use. Cost him \$35—he'll let it go for \$25. Another ASFO service.

Running out of space but it might be of interest to note that RAP is not only continuing FATE (there was some question above), but is launching a companion to be called MYSTIC. jb

-----L E T T E R S

Pickings are rather lean this time, so I'm going to cut the letter column short and hope you guys will have more time to write about this issue---hmm? But please don't expect an immediate reply to your letter-- I've already got two typewriters going full-time, and I'd hate to hafta buy another one to take care of ASFQ correspondence.

I just noticed the back cover of this issue is badly worded---the STORM ad; actually, no copies of THE IMMORTAL STORM are available yet at any price---what I meant to say was that copies could still be bought (not had) at the pre-publication price. Nobody will receive his copy of the book before November; but allow me to repeat just once more that if you intend to buy a copy of the STORM, please do it now. I have an idea that the book is going to move when November rolls around.

Before we get to the letters proper, I've just received another note from Cal Beck concerning his column. Here 'tis:

"...Del Rey has no connection with the John Raymond mags whatsoever, and never will according to present indications. It wasn't just once he "quit" or was "sacked" by the company. It's happened at least two or three times. At this moment, FANTASY is in the same state of affairs as it was two months ago. No new editor has been found, or if he has by this time, his name isn't known as yet. I learned a few days ago that del Rey was fired for the following reasons:

"Some half of the contents of magazines he edited were filled with his own stories, under multi-pen names. All of this was unknown to publisher Raymond. Del Rey was turning over a pretty good salary per each mag he edited, but it became a bit too much when he started paying out checks to himself for several loads of yarns he included in his own mags. At least, when Raymond found this out, naturally he didn't wuite approve of it.

"Another reason for the big "stink" raised by Ackerman and several scores of writers at Del Rey was owing to the circumstances in which our erstwhile editor became embroiled in. He had given so much time and effort to writing his stories, paying himself for them, and working on them, that he hadn't time to answer professional correspondence, read submitted manuscripts, nor answer writers and agents why he was delaying the matter. To quote some one else's opinion on this situation: "...del Rey was trying too much to look and act like a "Big Writer", and not giving a damn about his responsibilities or the opinions of others."

"I guess many slipped up in coming to hasty conclusions that del Rey was a 'martyr' in the hands of a misunderstanding and 'evil' boss-publisher. If del Rey was 'overworked', as he might have led others to think through some of his recent off-the-cuff and published statements, the only thing he overworked were his own stories and personal interests. He had no one else to blame but himself for what occurred.

"Far from being my own personal opinions, these reflect the sentiments of those who 'know' more of what's the score. Personally, I have nothing to bicker about del Rey's business, which is his own, but hand the news through as a reporter and nothing else. I only trust that Lester is able to see this, and should he, my advice is that he would do better in not letting another great opportunity slip so easily through his fingers in the future. However, if all the facts haven't been so far included (and sometimes there are more than two sides to a story), we're all willing to listen to what furthermore there is to be said on this issue."

-----Calvin ~~Thos~~ Beck, 20 Woodcliff Ave., Hudson Heights, New Jersey

There's much more to this letter, about other subjects, but I want to include a couple of comments on ASFO 2, anyway.

***---**

Dear Ian:

Received ASFO 2 not long ago. Appearance remains incredibly good---I don't know how you do it ((I wish I knew. jb))---but the cover wasn't as good as Burge's grand job for #1, and the material wasn't on the same level either. Beck was considerably more coherent than usual; obviously his responsibilities as a reviewer have taught him quite a bit in the way of expressing rational opinions. Hirschorn's bit fell flat, though well written; I'm a bit tired of this sort of work, and am not accepting any fan satires of the type for Spaceship. Dee was interesting, though overly cautious of offending anyone, and Nydahl was good---though I'd love the chance to edit a prozine and prove him all wrong. I'm sure that Horace Gold, Tony Boucher, and JWC, Jr., all deny the truth of his statement: idealism or no, all three would probably be happier with their 100,000 circulation than if they got double that with Browne's methods.

-----Bob Silverberg, 760 Montgomery Street, Brooklyn 13, New York

Dear Ian:

Once again thanks for ASFO, and once again I must compliment you on keeping your covers attuned to current events.

I see that, just as your previous cover featured the Chicon, so does the current cover depict the highlight of the Midwescon at Indian Lake.

There's Beatley's hotel in the background, and in the foreground our own distinguished visitor, Arthur C. Clarke, ready to don his webbed feet and fins and goggles for a dive into the lake.

Who can forget that immortal moment when Arthur demonstrated his spear-fishing technique, plunging off the diving-board and disappearing underwater for what seemed an endless eternity...only to emerge, triumphantly, with his trophy---an old inner tube---impaled on the end of his spear?

That to me was the highlight of the gathering.

-----Robert Bloch, 740 N. Plankinton Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin

((And I thought I had concealed the meaning so well, too, darn it!))

Dear Ian,

IT'S YOUR BABY by Roger Dee was the best in the issue. This is the sort of article I like. More please. I won't comment on how well written it was, since that would be unnecessary. ((Paying attention, Roger?...jb))

I loved Bloch's comment on the cover. Very humorous, but you, Grennell and myself know that he's never said a serious word in his life. ((Only you three guys know that, huh? Another scoop for ASFO!)) Only Robert could write a comment such as that. And maybe one or two others. If anyone else tried it they'd usually mess it up.

-----Joel Nydahl, 119 South Front Street, Marquette, Michigan

((Sorry I had to cut up your letter so badly, Joel, but if I hadn't it would have run into another page, and if it had run into another page I would've had to print the rest of the letters, which would only fill up about half the page, which would've left me with a page and a half with nothing to go in it but my own ad-libs. So I cut it.

Did I mention we're selling copies of the IMMORTAL STORM?jb))

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