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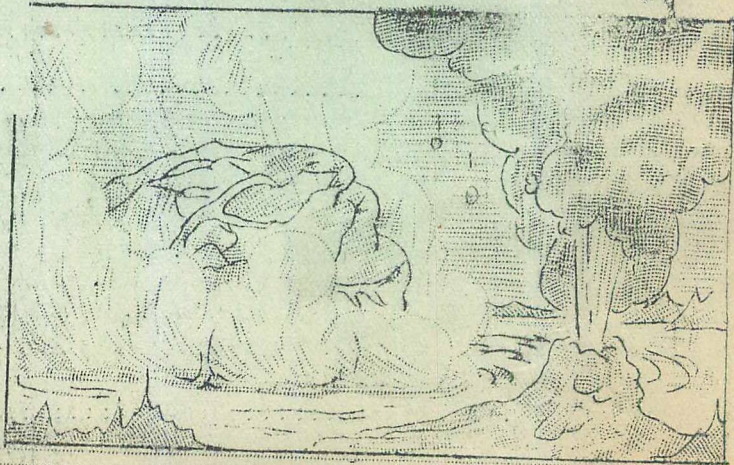
COSMOS

MAGAZINE



"A DATE
WITH A
VAMPIRE"

"ACCIDENT"



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+ COVER by Williams. All interiors by Williams, unless otherwise stated.

Edited by J. E. REMNISON at 82 Ramsgreave Drive, BLACKBURN, Lancs., England. Mimeographing is done by Dennis Tucker, and many thanks are due to him for his help. Thanks are also due to Arthur F. Williams for his help without which you might never have seen this mag.. Americans receive this free, but if you care to send a copy of your "pet" or a pro., or even just drop me a line I would appreciate it very much. Sorry, but there was not enough material on hand for the 20 pages promised, but we sincerely hope you enjoy this as much as we have producing it. Maybe there'll be another issue one day!

***** "RENTY" *****

*A DATE WITH A VAMPIRE*****By Ron Holmes*****

Pamella should have been asleep by rights, as it was well into the morning. Yet she lay awake, eyes bright watching the twinkling stars outside the open window. In her mind she lived again the most enjoyable evening, with each recollection finding another incident she had missed, to be thought about.*****Lying thus she could not help but see it enter the window. It was about the size of a bird at first. It fluttered in and settled on a mat right in a patch of moonlight. She smiled sleepily, "A bird", she breathed. But even as she looked it had become the size of a cat, and startled she sat up in bed. Now it had reached its full size.*****Pamella was a practical girl, and was now fully awake. The intruder was a man, a queer man no doubt, but never-the-less a man. Yes, very queer she decided. He wore a great black coat which made him look as if he had wings, but she decided that she must be mistaken. No, it couldn't be a cloak, nobody wore cloaks these days, so it must be the darkness.*****His figure was clear now, and he wore a dark suit. His face seemed queer in the half-light, surely not! No, it wasn't a bad face really, but he had no right to be there. Even as words trembled on her lips, the man spoke. "Stop it, please", he said. His voice was pleading. "Stop what?" said Pamella, "and who are you?" She drew the bed-clothes up to her neck, and her other hand found the switch. As the... light flashed on she found herself wondering if their voices could be heard in the flat below. "Stop thinking about me. I came in here with a wingspread of twenty feet, and you've disbelieved them away in a flash!" He glanced down at his drab suit dejectedly, and he made a hopeless gesture. "Twenty feet", said the ever-practical Pamella, "then how did you get in the window? I don't believe it". "Oh, we have a little trick which reduces one's size. Then we fly in a window and come back to our normal size again. It's quite simple really" He added by way of explanation. "What did you want in here anyway?" "Well", he looked like a schoolboy who had been caught stealing apples, "I came to drink some human blood. All we Vampires do it, you know, Union rules and all that sort of thing". "How do you do that?" "I make two incisions in your jugular vein with my fangs and" "Don't be silly", interposed Pamella, "you've not got any fangs". Her visitor clapped his hand to his mouth. "There you go again, I had them before you spoke, but not now. "Won't you please stop it?" He

looked hopelessly at Pamela, and then with a sigh of despair began, "Now please promise you won't say anything or think anything until I've finished. Fine. Well, I'm a Vampire, and a Vampire exists on human blood. It's not a bad life really, and now that we're organised there is very little chance of anyone driving stakes through our hearts or shooting us with silver bullets. There is one drawback, however. We have the ability to change our form at will, true, but not necessarily at our own will". He paused for breath, looking at Pamela apprehensively. "I appeared to you in the official way, I have to really, according to rules. You thought your eyes were deceiving you, and you disbelieved my form. So your will changed me into my present form, and to you I can only appear in this form or any other form you care to will me into. Hence if my fangs do not exist to you, I can't harm you with them Oh dear".*****Immediately Pamela had grasped the situation she had willed him to look like her favourite film star, and at once his features changed to mirror that casanova. The situation struck her as funny, and her laughter filled the room. The Vampire retreated across the floor and seated himself in an easy chair muttering, "A woman, I should have known". "Don't look so glum", said Pamela, "look at yourself in the mirror, you'll laugh to". "I'm sorry lady, but we don't cast reflections", he replied coldly. "I'm so sorry. What's your name? Mine's Pamela". "We don't have names, and assume them only when necessary". "I shall call you Mickey then". "No, please!". "Yes, I will. If you object, I'll will you into a Dodo". "Oh, alright. I don't see why I'm staying". It had just occurred to him that he could always leave. Out in the street he could be a Vampire; here he was condemned to portray a film star for her benefit. His ire was roused, and he rose to leave. Pamela caught his arm, "Oh no you don't," she said, making him sit down. "You came here unasked, but you won't go until I let you". "alright, what do you.. want?" Mickey asked. "I'm going to talk to you like a Mother. Where is your Mother at any rate?" "She died thirty years ago". "How old.. are you?" Pamela wanted to know. "Oh, about seventy-five". "Not bad for an old 'un". "Now look here, I've no time to waste. I must drink blood before dawn or". "Or what?" interposed Pamela. "Well, if I don't I won't get my record card marked. If that happens three times

I'll get into trouble. I've missed once so far". "But why must you?".
 "I dunno, I guess all we Vampires do it!" Pamella had been a Girl Guide in
 her younger days, and her trained eye had detected one who should be brought
 to see the straight and narrow. There was something else too, she wasn't
 sure about that though. She took his hand and said in a wee small voice...
 "Won't you promise not to drink blood tonight, just for me?" She looked into
 his eyes, and he could not resist. All her personality was turned upon him.
 "Alright, just for tonight", he promised, wondering why he did so. "I'd
 better go now, it'll be dawn soon". "Goodbye", whispered Pamella, her...
 eyes shining. "I'll have to go down the stairs if you don't will me into
 a bat". "Goodbye", said Pamella again, "You'll come back again, won't...
 you?" As she spoke he became a tiny fluttering thing which passed out of
 the window into the night. It was a very puzzled Vampire indeed which
 flitted quickly after the moon.

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The next evening, as Pamella had hoped, the little bat flew in the window &
 settled upon the carpet. Immediately it changed into the drab-suited film
 star, then into several other forms as Pamella amused herself with her power
 over him. Finally she allowed him to resume human shape, carefully avoiding
 giving him a too handsome appearance. She had pondered the point quite a
 lot during the day and had finally decided to give him features which were
 not so marked as her film hero. Mickey had been annoyed by his welcome,
 having suspected that some form of indignity would fall to his lot on his
 return. Yet, he had returned; a thing which surprised him not a little. He
 seated himself in the arm chair and scowled. Pamella put aside the book
 she had been studiously reading since darkness had fallen and crossed to his
 chair. She ruffled his hair gently and laughed at his discomfort. "Men
 are so much like children", she said happily, "and you look a darling when
 you're angry".

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Towards dawn he rose with a start. "It's too late now", he said, "I've
 missed my marking for the third time". "What does that matter?" "I'll
 be disallowed probably". "They'll put me on day work. It's far more diff-
 icult on day work", he added. "Why, dear?" Pamella slid her hand into his.

"We must wait about in Hospitals or Morgues for corpses with fresh blood. It's a cold job too; the warmest thing to be is a mouse, but even that feels cold!"

"Then give it up, please, for me. With your ability and wisdom you could be a business man - a successful one too".

"That's all very well, but think of my profession. If I leave now under such circumstances I'll lose my membership and everything. I'll never be allowed to be a Vampire again!....."

"Don't you think it's worth it? We could settle down and have a family, just a little one".

"I didn't know you felt that way about it".

"I do", she breathed.

"Oh Pamella".

"Darling Mickey, you're so blind".

At that moment dawn broke, and a moment later Mickey lay upon the floor in a sleep from which no effort of Pamella's could waken him. She could not know of course, that during the hours of daylight only the ill-fated day-workers and the Ruling Vampire could move freely abroad.*****After a while she gave up her efforts for his recovery and sat deliberating the wisdom of sending for medical aid. Finally she decided not to do that, some sense warning her to remain by Mickey's side. Nor did her intuition play her false. She had not waited long when a particularly large and black Raven flew in the... window and settled upon the floor. It grew in size until it reached the proportions of a man. A large and terrible man, the Ruler of the Vampires himself. Pamella's blood ran cold, she could not disbelieve him, she knew Vampires did exist.*****Yet even as he approached her, her mind pondered the point. His green eyes fascinated her, and she could neither speak nor move. There was a picture in his eyes, and she saw herself a crumpled heap on the floor. The Vampire was taking Mickey in his arms.*****Her Mickey!! She must save him. Like a tigress she turned to the attack. 'Concentrate Pamella', she begged herself, 'For God's sake'. Before her eyes now the ugly thing which barred her way to happiness was changing. Those green eyes were grey now, the evil face was round and jovial. The Vampire Ruler was a fat little man of about fifty, bald and merry.*****Pamella fell into a faint, and pulsating darkness engulfed her. When she recovered Mickey was bending over her, kissing her, begging her to speak. "Mickey", she sobbed, "has he gone? Are you alright?"

"Yes, my dear, I gave him my resignation", he said, "His new form shook him so badly that he was pleased to accept it and go".

Contd. on next page.

They have been very happy during the last six years, Mickey, of course stay-
ed in the form which Pamela had given him, and began to age from the time of
resignation. They have a little boy, too, and they called him Mickey. He's
a great favourite among his playmates, and the image of his mother. *****
Tomorrow he will be four, and they're sending him to school. His teacher's
will find him a most unusual pupil. He neither casts a shadow nor a reflec-
tion in a mirror.

THE END.

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 * THE CHANGES IN THINGS" by ROBERT J. SILBURN. *

It seems to be the fashion now to cut at Paul; well, I think he's lousy sometimes, but not half as bad as some people make out. Just because he has a different style from Schneeman or Roy Isip doesn't bar him from polite society. I like Schneeman, Isip, Rogers, Paul, and, with the exception of Kramer, I can rake up a liking for most sf. artists. They all have their bad moments and they all have their perfect ones. I don't like them all at once, probably, but I think that the variations of style are good.*****A mag. that is illustrated by one artist or two or three artists with the same style, begins to get boring. Take the 1936 AMAZING (All-Morey), the 1937 TWS (Marchioni) and the present ASF when they give Schoenam the whole issue. *****In my opinion, giving the whole issue to one artist for any length of time will ruin that artist, however good he is, because people will get sick of him. And poor old Paul falls into this category. In the old TWS he was given most of the pics. For years he often had whole mags, to himself, and now the old fans, being human, incline towards other artists for a change. But they shouldn't drag Paul through the mud because of this. If they had nothing else but Schoenam for years and suddenly a chap called Paul whom they'd never seen before, came along, they would flock to him, not because he was especially good, but just for a change. That's the keynote of human affairs - CHANGE. So stop panning Paul because you want a change.

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BY DONALD J. DOUGHTY.

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Nieuw was puzzled. It was the first time he had been puzzled for many eons, and he scarcely knew what to do about it. He had not met any such extraordinary phenomena for a very long time; his existence had been quite orderly for so great a period. But here was something with which his automatic reflexes could not deal; he subconsciously realised that he must revive his long dormant... mass of brain plasma, and really think - if he could remember how to do that! Far from desisting, his perplexity increased.*****His form but a huge, unshapely mass of protoplasm, he sensed rather than saw; hearing he had not, and feeling he knew not. An unaccountable drop in the vast eternity which surrounded him, an eternity that he took for granted - time was unknown to him. Even that eternity itself meant nothing to him. How and why he existed it had never occurred to him to question.*****He was, that he knew and very little more. Never questioning his creation, his means of existence and preservation; never did he think of his inevitable ending, his ultimate purpose. Wonder was new to him, an experience so uncanny, tantalising and unusual. Nieuw wondered and puzzled, and even in doing so, wondered why *****His huge mass was floating very slowly and effortlessly through space. He normally sensed utter blackness surrounding him, with here and there a pin-prick of something that wasn't blackness - light! Not knowing why everything should not be pure blackness, he had sensed these points of its absence, just sensed them, and left it at that.*****This absence of darkness was the cause of his present dilemma, for in one section of the great sphere of blackness surrounding him it was increasing. Only in one particular section, as though one of the pin-points of light was gradually increasing in size. The area of space covered by this slowly growing point was becoming so large that even he could not ignore it any longer. With the continuing increase of absence of darkness came another even less understand

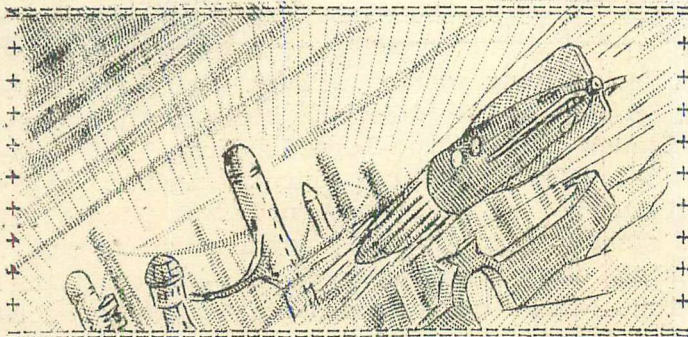
-able sensation, a radiation beating down upon Nicuv's plasmic surface which he could not even adequately describe, and much less successfully attempt to place. Had he but known it, he was for the first time experiencing warmth - a terrific heat compared with the cold of absolute zero.*****Deep down in his huge, sluggish brain, far away from its conscious surface, a sudden small thought warned him of danger. Obeying instinctively the warning of that thought Nicuv attempted to manoeuvre himself to a position receding from this malignant source of light. But he could not! He was being inevitably drawn at an ever-increasing velocity toward that glowing point which excelled all else in the well of familiar blackness.*****Finding that his thoughts could provide no reason for the presence of the approaching light spot, nor for its strange attraction, Nicuv gave up his thinking, and resigned himself to whatever might happen. What would happen he did not know, and he awaited it with a very slight, almost morbid, interest. Nicuv's sense of heat and light radiations increased almost beyond his endurance, & he slowly realised that his existence would be ended when they increased beyond that point of ultimate endurance.*****A shadow of dense blackness crept across the fiery circle at a speed that surprised Nicuv's senses, as the radiations pouring onto his mass quickly decreased. Too late he realised that he was now caught by a large, though lightless object, careering through space close to the overpowering source of light. Too late. Nicuv hurtled down through a dense atmosphere to land with world-shaking concussion in denser liquid which formed an ocean on the planet with which he had collided.*****The mass of Nicuv's body, from the depths of interplanetary space, stewed in the foaming oceans of the Earth; a boiling Earth in the days of pre-history. His protoplasmic mass stewed.....and in stewing, it collapsed into tiny, individual, life-seeking cells.....

Dr. Reading mounted the dias in front of his class, and with his usual nervous, preliminary gesture, settled his spectacles firmly on his snub nose.*****A slight cough, and he started. "The subject of my lecture this morning is that ever-present and intriguing quantity - Life. Many authorities insist that this happening, this Life, which has culminated in Man himself, is but an unfortunate accident.....!"

+ THE END.

An article on the question of the dayBY DEREK W. GARDNER.

It is about ten years now since Gernsback started publishing his film petition form in every WONDER STORIES, and now at last American film magnates have awakened to the fact that there is a substantial demand for such films. Unfortunately, however, Hollywood is, as a whole, loathe to take any fresh... steps forward until forced to do by public opinion in the shape of box office takings.*****Bearing this in mind it is not really surprising that of the fantasy films made now, 90% or more can be tabulated under one or more of the four following headings :- (a) "The mad or fanatical scientist" type; (b) "The soulless human monster" type; (c) The straight weird; and (d) The comedy sciencefiction or horror film.*****I am not sure which was the... first type (a) film, but it is obvious that most of the Karloff thrillers... fall into this category, for instance, "BEHIND THAT DOOR" in which he uses... several men as human guinea pigs in an attempt to re-discover a lost formula, or again in the lately-released "THE ELECTRIC MAN".*****Probably the root of most of (b), and certainly the best known, was "FRANKENSTEIN" with Karloff as the "soulless monster"; and since then there have been many variations on this theme, with, perhaps, the best of late being "THE MUMMY'S... HAND".*****The American weird films date back to about the time of "DRACULA" with Bela Lugosi as the Vampire Count, but these are usually rather... tame compared with the earlier German attempts, as in "THE GOLEM" or "GENUINE" and many others.*****Comedy films with a sciencefiction or weird flavour are fairly common, from the very early trick film made in 1902 by the Frenchman Melies called "A TRIP TO THE MOON" in which the Lunarians vanish into puffs of smoke on receiving a blow etc.. Later came the more ambitious "JUST IMAGINE" in 1930 and then a flood of them, although to-day they seem to be slacking off somewhat.*****From this brief resume it is obvious.. that except for a notable few, the films being made now are, from a fantasy point of view, very inferior specimens, and it is among these few that the.. hope for the future lies. Although they may not be very good, films like "EARTHBOUND" are a step in the right direction towards a new fantasy-film, and it is to be hoped that at least some directors will take the plunge. THE
(How about "DR. CYCLOPS" for an excellent pure sfn. film? ED). END



MARTIAN DAYDREAM

BY DONALD HOUSTON.

nothing lived.*****But the city was not dead, for it contained the last remnants of the species that had built it, a species older than the very sand surrounding their last great work. Yes, they were very old these two thousand beings.*****And they lived in peace and quiet, disturbing none, and not expecting to be disturbed themselves. They had lost much of their knowledge through the ages since they had reached their peak, but still they retained their love of peace and quiet, and happiness reigned over all.*****

Then one day, just as the sun had once again commenced its weary journey across the sky, the silence, which had surrounded everything for so many hundreds of centuries, was broken. At first the noise was so faint that it was not noticed by many, but as the time slowly ticked by, it gradually increased in volume until every eye was turned heavenward. And there, far up in the sky, was seen a rapidly approaching speck which soon resolved itself into a bullet-shaped machine with spasmodic bursts of fire and smoke coming from its forward parts.*****It soon became apparent to all that this weird monster from the skies was rapidly decreasing its speed and at last after one final and terrific burst it gradually flattened out and shot over the city away towards the horizon.*****But it had not gone, for it slowly, oh so slowly, wheeled round and as gently as a feather settled to the midst of a vast cloud of sand, only a short distance from the edge of the city.*****By the time the sand had cleared away, all the inhabitants had flocked out to view this thing from the skies, and there was much speculat-

ion as to what it could be. But they had no sooner arrived than to the accompaniment of a great clanging an opening appeared in the side of the mountain. From this opening issued a weird two-legged being. It looked around. It snapped a few harsh-sounding and quite unintelligible words to the inhabitants, and upon receiving no answer it returned from whence it had come. But not for long, for a short time later it returned with two... other similar beings bearing a strange instrument between them, consisting apparently of a long tube and various other accessories mounted upon a stand. This machine was pointed at the inhabitants, between whom a great controversy had arisen as to what it was. But they were not left in doubt for long. One of the creatures began fiddling about with it and suddenly across the still Martian air rose the unmistakable song of a machine gun. ***** The inhabitants of Earth had conquered space at last. The End.

TO PAY OR NOT TO PAY ?

by H. K. BUJNER.



That is the question that is confronting Fandom to-day and which has caused a number of different ideas and suggestions to arise. In America, where, as is reasonably inevitable, the idea originated, SMIDE and others are paying for all material printed (apart, of course, from letters and ratings etc.). The rates are not high, one couldn't expect them to be, but however small (I

believe they are something like 1 cent for 25 words) they represent the spirit of payment for stories just as much as the aristocratic rates of ASF. Is this good for Fandom?? The answer to that question is tremendously complex. As Michael Rosenblum has said, it is an indication that Fandom is "growing up". It is up to the fans composing Fandom to see that it doesn't grow up along the wrong path. It is more with the effect upon fans and fan material that we are at present concerned. It is obvious that there is more keenness to write a story if there is something, however small, to repay some of the effort. But it is just this thought of payment that will

drive fans to write merely for the sake of that reward and not, as they have done so far, for the pleasure of writing. It can be argued that it is an honour and sufficient reward to have one's name in certain fanzines. This will not be denied, but it is also a sure indication that the quality of those fanzines was high originally, for them to have gained such an enviable.. reputation. They would not accept understandard material. It seems then that fans will root around and turn out some old, hack plot, re-garnish it, sending a little life feebly pulsing through its withered veins. This will almost in every case be accepted by the fan editor out of his distraction for material of which there is not enough for the present-day number of fanzines. Payment will be made, editor and author will be satisfied; but will the reader? Another facet to this question is that from my own (fairly limited)... knowledge it is a fact that no fan-editor makes much over his costs; most publish at a loss. What relevance has this fact to payment for material? It would seem therefore that payment, apart from destroying the esprit de corps of friendly fandom, also is disastrous in itself. I will not go so far as to say that it implies the breakdown of non-profit fanzines, but it would seem to mean either that, or else the fan-editor has yet another financial burden to bear. All this is more in the nature of destructive criticism. The only answer to this question, on the constructive side, is to scrap all idea of payment on the same scale for all material, and to substitute either a sliding scale or else partial and restricted payment. Both these counter suggestions hinge on the same idea - that only the best of the material.. should be paid for, whether by reader's vote, or editorial selection. In the first suggestion the best piece receives the greatest remuneration, dropping down to the last piece of tripe; in the second suggestion, only, say, the first three ranking pieces receive anything. These are concrete suggestions, capable of use, and not mere idle vapourings. Quite freely I admit that they are not absolutely original, but this problem seems one worthy of the earnest consideration of all fans interested in the furtherance of the wellbeing of fandom. UNIQUE has modified its policy, and FANTARE adopts a system basically the same as those outlined above. This question must concern all active fans personally, and all others through the quality they expect from fan periodicals. Fandom is putting on long trousers, will we allow it but cheap-jack braces?

† THE END.

OUR ANCESTORS LACKED FORESIGHT by BOB GIBSON (a fellow-sufferer).

I.

When I'm reaping the fields of whiskers
That persistently sprout from my face,
I regret my ancestors were hairy men,
From some hairy pre-academic race.

The beards may have helped to prevent them
From having veins torn from their throats,
But for us the face hair is a nuisance,
That is steadily getting our goats.

When the R. S. M. orders, "Stand nearer
The razor next time that you shave",
I wish my ancestors were reptiles -
And the thought makes each turn in his grave.

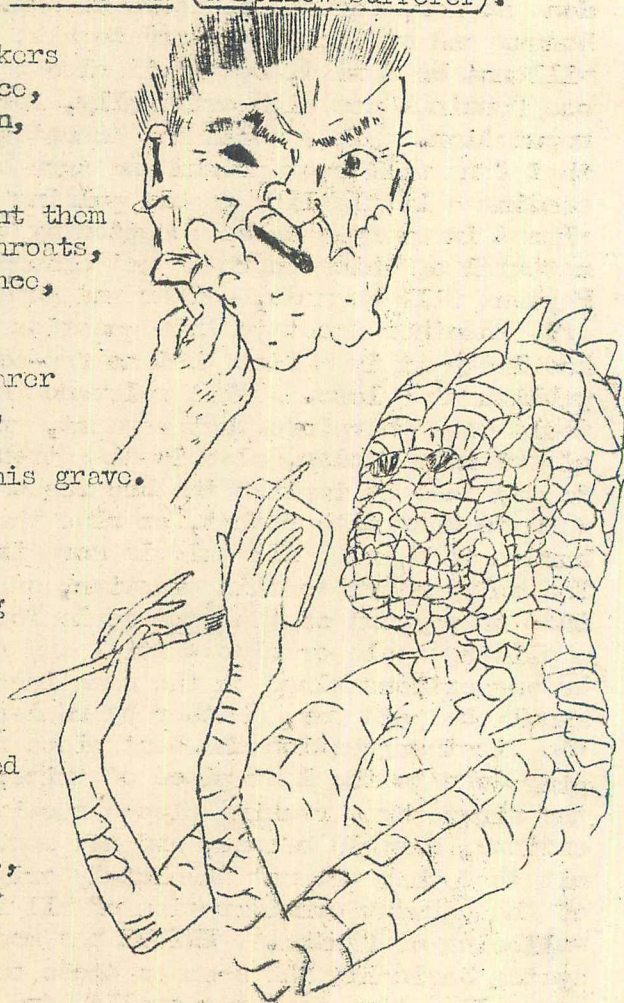
And the dynamo-hum of their turning
Never causes me half as much grief
As the slices of hide I lose, trying
To shave the beard suitably brief.

If all my ancestors were reptiles,
Instead of an earlier few,
And if I was scaled and not whiskered
There wouldn't be shaving to do.

But if I had scales and not whiskers,
At the danger my countenance pales -
A reptile R. S. M. would order
A daily BLANCOing of scales.

Illustrations by Bob Gibson.

Reproduced by Arthur F. Williams.



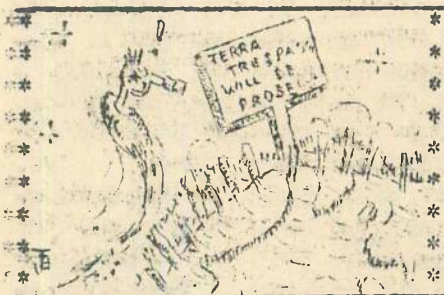
An article on the future everyone is talking about - the future after the war.
P O S T W A R S O C I O L O G Y by Jack Gibson.

It is generally acknowledged that the years immediately following the conclusion of the war will bring a number of far-reaching changes in widely differing spheres. Yet very few people seem to realise just how vast some of these changes will be.*****Especially is this true of the political and sociological aspects, for despite the numerous references to the "solidarity of public opinion", in the Press, there is a very strong undercurrent of dissatisfaction with the present Government. To those who have the intelligence to probe beneath the surface, and the courage to face unpleasant facts, it is obvious that something is radically wrong with our present form of democracy. We are forced to put our trust in politicians who, a year ago, were very much anti-Russia, and who now profess an admiration for the Soviet. People are beginning to wonder just how far such men can be relied upon.*****It is being borne in upon the public consciousness that the oft-disparaged U.S.S.R. are not the hell they have been led to believe. Russia's... sociology has many faults but one fact outweighs them all. Nobody is allowed to make profit out of war or to exploit the sufferings of others for his own personal gain. This fact is not generally known to Britons, but when it is, people will want to know why, if such a principle is practicable, profiteering has been so rife. "Why", they will ask, "has our Government not enforced a similar doctrine here?" The answer is not far to seek, not because Parliament - or rather those who control Parliament - could not enforce it, but because they would not.*****I am no Communist, but I believe very strongly that when Russia has won this war for us - as she will - the British people should demand a somewhat similar sociology to that extant in the U.S.S.R. to-day.*****What chance is there of achieving such a change? If we wait for the right moment the chances are good. When atomic... power becomes a reality the positions of our economic dictators will be a little shaky. Transmutation on a large scale will be possible, and transmutation can shatter the power of the capitalists. We must see that it does *****Some of you who read this are doubtless thinking, "Why must we keep talking and writing politics?"

ago I felt as you do now, but in that time I have come to realize ~~that it is~~ the duty of everyone to concern himself with politics. Particularly is it the duty of those who desire the establishment of a World State, and what science fiction fan does not? Perhaps it is not a pleasant duty, ~~but it is~~ absolutely vital.

THE END

***** : : *****



ALAS, POOR TERRA !

by JACK BANKS.

"Bang!" Don't worry, it's only the wicked denizens of the planet Gobstop, attempting to destroy this old globe, the Earth, for the ninety nine hundredth time. Only the poor fools think they're pioneers in the good old pastime of putting an end to the miserable existence of the Earthlings. But what a shock they'll get when they discover that the gallant inventor Hamilton Edmond has a foolproof scheme for fooling their machinations. Because this isn't the first time it's been tried. Why, judging from the number of the various inhabitants of the Solar System, fourth dimension and the universes next door who have had a go at blowing up, dissolving and generally liquidating this poor planet of ours, we must be awfully disliked by the rest of creation. I wonder why? It couldn't be because we're so kind to each other on Earth, could it? And that the other races are so jealous of the peace and harmony existing here, that they just can't bear to see it? Whatever the reason, they try time and time again. Why, there must be enough "mighty, imperishable monuments" of steel and other assorted metals, erected in honour of the legions of world savers, to make a sizeable haul for the salvage man. The world should consider itself lucky to have so many brave sons and daughters ready to give their energies to the ticklish problem of saving the Earth. For, it's "Alas, Poor Terra!" when some of the science fiction boys get to work. Why, just looking at random through your archives, what does one find? Well here's a gent

known as the "mad oriental emperor Volan" actually splitting the Earth! Where was Captain Future when that happened? Compared to this, the bombardment of Earth with "meteors" by the Martians is just pea shooting. The Martians, indeed, at first glance, seem to be the favourite villains of the planetary stage, but we can surely forgive them such playfulness when we know, that according to George Wallis, they're going to commit hari-kiri on a cosmic scale, and to save our world from disaster. Yes, it's a sober thought to know that we're thought worthy of such an act on their part, and enough, I should think, to make even a tear of remorse trickle down the stony faces of those fans, who, from their lofty perch on Mt. Cynicus, constantly assure us that mankind isn't worth saving anyway, and all this idealism is wasted. But enough, these are idle musings and not part of my immediate subject. They merely creep in..... Yes, the Earth has had some pretty drastic face-liftings in the pages of science fiction. When the mad scientists start up their fiendish inventions --- Watch your hat, quick, there goes another one! He's "The Man Who Stopped The Earth" and he's made a thorough job of it. Terra is no more. But even this bloke hasn't anything on the ruthless robots of Jack Williamson, who calmly throw the Earth into the Sun. Besides that, the atomic explosions of Olaf Stapledon, which toast the world enough to kill all the inhabitants except a score or so, are just "getting warm". Milder still was "The Earth's Cancer", speedily diagnosed and cured by the redoubtable Dr. Bird. Future progress will bring a corresponding advance, I suppose, in the art of world saving, and our descendants will look back with a touch of regret at the reckless past, when one didn't know from where the danger would come next, whether from the coal black inhabitants of Pluto, or the 'orrible hordes of the fourth dimension. In the future, if any invaders are senseless enough to ignore the barbed wire and notice, "Trespassers will be Prosecuted", well, if the Earth Guard don't deal with them, there's always the reliable firm of Earth Rehabilitators Consolidated to clear up any mess they might make. Ah me, such is progress.

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