

HAPPY NEW YEAR

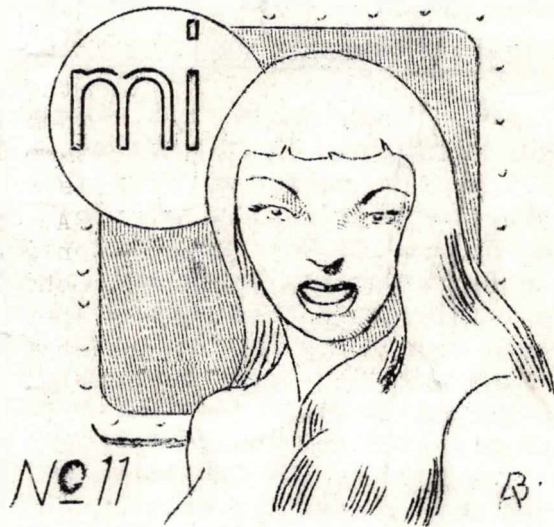
SOMETHING GOOD

Your intrepid mi reporter, and his girl friend, has recently been Going To The Cinema. THE TIME MACHINE was one recent film seen, and it's certainly one of the best s-f films I've seen for quite some time - although this can not be taken as a criterion as I've studiously avoided the movies labelled s-f over the past couple of years. Noting that this was a George Pal production helped to persuade me into going to see it, and I'm glad I did. The Time Machine itself, greatly helped to set the mood for the rest of the film - a fine conception of how a time-machine would probably have been designed in the period of the film - and I couldn't help but wonder if Roland Emmett had been called in to design it. My only real criticism of the film, is of the portrayal of the Morlocks as dirty-grey gorillas. Allright they'd been living in the underworld for countless aeons, but down there with them was some hyper futuristic machinery (in the film, anyway), and a dirty-grey gorilla hardly fits into this type of surrounding. Surely some suave dirty-grey stoat-like Thing could have been conceived, with a gleam of feral intelligence in its eyes....and the make-up man could still have used up his stock of dirty-grey make-up! It was a Good s-f film though.

SOMETHING BAD

Whilst in Minneapolis I went pocket-book shopping, and spent a couple of very pleasant hours acquiring some twenty-odd s-f pb's. I'm now getting down to reading the ones at the bottom of the stack and can state quite equivocally, that the oddest of the lot is Frank Belknap Long's "Woman From Another Planet".

Beacon/Galaxy have recently been accenting SEX in their s-f pb's, despite this the stories they've published have been reasonably readable. "Pagan Passions" was a fairly pleasant romp, and Farmer's "Flesh" was quite heartwarming in its cosmic intensity at times. WFAP is pretty grim though, I don't usually take offence at a leavening of sex in a story, but this is little else but pornography with a very thin veneer of s-f. It's poorly written too...in one particular episode the hero is attacked by a Martian beast which tears "...a deep gash from knock to waist ..".half a page later his only injury is "...a livid disfiguration running the length of his spine." Ech. It's published by Chariot Books, and if I may make a most horrible pun, I don't feel at all Chariotable towards the publishers! Let's start another stencil and talk of more pleasant things.....



An almost-Monthly rider with SKYRACK, published and written by Eric Benteliffe, 47 Aldis St, Great Moor, Stockport, Cheshire.

Illo is by Bill Harry, Boy Beatnik, and came smelling faintly of espresso coffee.

SOMETHING SPIFFING

Congratulations are due to Ted Carnell and NEW WORLDS on attaining 100 issues of the magazine, and in steadily improving the quality all along the line. Right now, I think NW is the most readable s-f mag being published, and I find myself picking it up more eagerly than F&SF or ASTALOG. However, it's not about issue 100 that I want to talk, but 101, and a very fine story therein by John Rackham. Now John is something of a stormy-petrel in fandom, he likes to criticise everything, but if he'll write some more stories like "TRIAL RUN" I'll forgive him for everything. This is science-fiction as I like it, in the grand manner with a background of interesting stellar strife, and convincing characters. Basically, it's the tale of a space-crew (a Top space-crew) and its triumph over Martian-allies and Arc-enemies. It's the type of story that was once well-done in Astounding, and measures up to the best that appeared in that magazine. I only wish it had been twice as long...and I don't get that feeling about many stories these days.

SOMETHING TRAD

" THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER " is another recently seen movie, and this one was quite enjoyed too. I didn't find the characters wholly convincing, but the background and settings was extremely well done, and there was some fine photography in the film. In Manchester it received the type of billing usually only given to the worst of the horror films, with bloodstained-posters and dishevelled-maidens, and ordinarily this would have kept me from seeing it, but the alternative was Norman Wisdom (whom I find more horrible than the worst horror movie!). The screenplay was by Richard Mathieson, I only wish they'd had Bloch do it...but it was still pretty good, and the Girl Friend who hadn't read Poe enjoyed it more than myself - which probably points a moral somewhere.

THE SCIENCE FICTIONAL SHERLOCK HOLMES (\$3.00.)

Came through the letterbox a few days before X'mas, sandwiched between HABBAKUK and a hand-done Calendar from Ken McIntyre. It didn't have a covering-note, but I presume that it has been sent to me for review. And I'm pleased to be able to recommend it. "The S-F Sherlock Homes", is published by Robert Petersen, 2845 So. Gilpin, Denver 10, Colorado, and it is a rather good collection of s-f stories featuring the legendary inhabitant of Baker Street. The stories are Poul Andersen's "The Martian Crown Jewels", " The Adventure of the Misplaced Hound", by Poul Andersen & Gordon Dickson, " The Anomaly of the Empty Man" and "The Great Tertian", by Anthony Boucher, " The Adventure of the Snitch In Time" and "The Adventure of the Ball Of Nostradamus", by Mack Reynolds and August Derleth, and the Beam Piper/ John J. McGuire story "The Return. My favourite is the Hoka story, but they are all good and made pleasant re-reading. There's a fine introduction by Tony Boucher and altogether it's a book worth having and one of the best theme collections I've read. Now I'd like to see someone do the same for Merlin...

WHAT WILL FEMME-FANDOM DO NOW

A recent letter from Avram Davidson reports Harlan Ellison "...weds this afternoon in an antick Greenwich Village conventicle shared conjointly by a Reformed Conservative Synagogue and a Presbyterian Church ". Congratulations Harlan, and where are you going to write up the honeymoon ?