NOTES AND COMMENT

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INTRODUCTION

This is the first issue of this journal, and a brief statement of its purpose is in order.

Notes and Comment will be published at whatever intervals prove feasible, and it is hoped at least four or five times a year. It will be devoted entirely to information and discussion relating to any phase of science fiction, the aim being to present only material of sufficient interest to be placed permanently on record.

The circulation will be limited to members and associates of the Futurian Society of Sydney, who will receive it gratis.

Contributions will be considered on their merit. Much of the material, however, will have been published before. Most of the useful commentary on science fiction which has been written has appeared in ephemeral publications of very small circulation, and it is considered that to bring some of it together in a medium available to even our small membership will be a useful service.

No attempt will be made to interpret the current scene, but articles will often be selected with a view to topical appeal. Though anything in the field may be discussed, there will be some emphasis on readily accessible works, and reviews of books in the FSS Library will be featured regularly.

SCIENCE FICTION BY NEW ZEALANDERS

Considering the comparatively small number of novels written by New Zealanders, it is surprising how many of them, without too much strain, can be fitted into the tradition of early science fiction.

Most of the first novels written in the country were pioneering tales, exploiting the wonders -- both real and imaginary -- of this newly settled land, in the form of domestic and adventure stories for British consumption. Yet one strong strain of thought in the 19th century was of political and social progressivism, which saw New Zealand as an experimental laboratory for the working out of social reforms as an example to the rest of the world. This progressivism showed itself in a flood of pamphlets and articles, but it also spilled over into fiction.

So we find that, in the last century, this small land made its own special contribution to Utopian and anti-Utopian literature, paralleling works like Edward Bellamy's _Looking Backward_ and William Morris's _News from Nowhere_, and anticipating the critical Utopias of C. S. Lewis, Pohl and Kornbluth, and Kurt Vonnegut.

Significantly enough, the first book ever to have its setting in New Zealand was a satirical work on the pattern of Gulliver's Travels -- _The Travels of Hildebrand Bowman, Esquire_, published in England in 1778, by an anonymous writer inspired by Cook's journals. Hildebrand Bowman, wrecked in Queen Charlotte Sound in 1773, tells us of his weird adventures in imaginary lands forming New Zealand, all of which parody English laws and customs. This quaint satire is the parent of all New Zealand imaginative fiction.

Two much better known books, Samuel Butler's _Erewhon_ (1873) and _Erewhon Revisited_ (1901) are also set in the country. Erewhon ("nowhere" inverted), a land in which British values and beliefs are satirically inverted, is located beyond a mountain range in the Rangitata district. Butler, while sheep farming in Canterbury, wrote the core of Erewhon as an article, "Darwin among the machines", published in the Christchurch Press in 1863, and when he returned to England worked up his famous stories from this, plus his knowledge of the New Zealand landscape.

The country also has an association with Jules Verne, the father of modern science fiction, for one of Verne's adventure stories is set there. This is _Among the Cannibals_, Volume 3 of _A Voyage Around the World_ [Les Enfants du Capitaine Grant] (1868). The Frenchman's aristocratic hero and heroine navigate the Waikato River, survive a Maori imprisonment and an eruption of Tongariro, and struggle through primeval kauri forests at Poverty Bay. Panagel, their faithful Maori guide, stuffs them full of information about the land, not always, alas, accurate. Moas are eighteen feet high, kiwis appear in whole coveys, and Panagel himself bears on his chest a tattooed heraldic kiwi with outspread wings! A lesser Verne, this story is in

his adventure, not his science fiction, category.

In 1867, Edwin Fairburn (an ancestor of the well-known poet, A. R. D. Fairburn) wrote a strange story under the pseudonym of "Mohoao". Called The Ships of Tarshish, it was a sequel to Eugene Sue's The Wandering Jew, and its chief purpose was to urge Fairburn's ideas about new designs for battleships. Although the story is incoherent, the writing poor and the whole book full of crack-brained ideas, the battleships proposed do forshadow the later style of Ironclads. The story ends with Britain being defeated in a World War because of lack of preparedness.

A much more readable work is R.H. Chapman's Mina-whenua (1888), which is a kind of early Lost Horizon. It purports to be a manuscript found attached to a Maori kite near Lake Wakatipu, telling of the adventures of a mountaineering party in Western Otago, who, crossing a high range, discover a lost Maori tribe, the Ngati-moa, living an idyllic life in a valley, with moas as mounts. Its inventiveness makes Mina-whenua rank with Verne's adventure stories.

Sir Julius Vogel, Prime Minister of New Zealand 1875-6, also had a try at fictional prediction in Anno Domini 2000, or Woman's Destiny (1889), perhaps the most preposterous book of its kind ever written here. Vogel's heroine is Hilda Fitzgerald, Duchess of New Zealand, who in an era of feminine equality becomes a great statesman, marries the Emperor of Britain, reconquers the American colonies (New York becomes the capital of Canada) and institutes social security and Home Rule for Ireland. Although dull and imaginatively weak, the story serves to set out Vogel's ideas on the emancipation of women and social reform.

The matter of women's rights produced a livelier book in Edward Tregear's Hedged with Divinities (1895), inspired by a female correspondent who wrote to Tregear to say that women would do without men altogether. "Apparently" says the author, "this lady really imagined that the human race could be recruited from gooseberry bushes." His novel is an entertaining skit on feminism, which tells of a plague destroying all men save one, who then finds himself plagued with the huge problems of multiple polygamy —— or not. In recent years at least three other writers have used a similar idea to the one Tregear dreamed up over half a century ago.

Perhaps the closest books to modern science fiction, although they are in some ways the least imaginative, are Riallaro: the Archipelago of Exile (1901) and Limanora: the Island of Progress (1903), published by Professor Macmillan Brown under the pen-name of "Godfrey Sweven". Professor Brown, inspired by the potential of Victorian science, and by the 19th century ideas of progress, creates Riallaro, an imaginary state, to satirise obscurantists and reactionaries, and in Limanora shows

a race dedicated to scientific experiment and replacing politics and religion by enlightened scientific humanism. The pattern of the latter book's ideas does in some measure anticipate modern scientism, and the writing in both is superior to that of most of their kind. The stories, however, are thin and poor in incidents.

Since the turn of the century, few books have been written by New Zealanders which could be called, even by courtesy, science fiction. Novelists are concerned too narrowly with the problems of growing up and living in their community to spare time for other fields. Only two books, The Angel of the Earthquake (1909) by Frank Morton, and The Scene is Changed (1932) by James Ray, both "catastrophe" stories, are likely to interest SF readers. Satirical works tend to be realistic or semi-realistic rather than imaginative, nowadays — like John Gillies' Voyagers in Aspic and Dermot Cathie's She's Right.

However, although the stream of SF or imaginative writing seems to have dried up of recent years, the existence of so many precedents in our earlier writing should sooner or later inspire some young writer nourished on modern SF to carry the tradition a step further, and produce a genuine up-to-date example of the genre.

— John C. Reid, M.A., Litt. D.

WEINBAUM AFTER TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

The name of Stanley G. Weinbaum is one which may have little significance for many of today's readers, in spite of its inclusion in the Hall of Fame which science fiction has built for itself.

It would seem appropriate to anticipate the questions which the countless readers who do not know his work are bound to ask, and to recall to those who do how they breathed his name with reverence in days when he was the Master of Science Fiction.

Few writers in any field can have met with such instant success as did Weinbaum in the field of science fiction. It was at a time when complaints were heard on every hand that science fiction was in a rut; when the field comprised but three magazines, two of which had not long to live in their existing shape. His first story, the now famous "A Martian Odyssey", appearing in the July 1934 Wonder Stories, came as a reviving draught to jaded readers, who greeted it with rapturous praise, and as an inspiration to many writers who sought to emulate his example if not actually imitate his style. It was the new approach, the fresh touch science fiction needed.

Weinbaum, then aged 32, was a member of a literary group known as the Milwaukee Fictioneers, of which Raymond A. Palmer and Ralph Milne Farley were others already well known in science fiction circles. It was Farley, with whom he had collaborated

in writing a gangster novel, who suggested that he try his hand at the more imaginative type of story. Presumably he needed little persuasion, since it was a type very attractive to one of his capacities; but it is said that his first piece was deliberately fashioned so that the fantastic element would be as humorously extravagant as he could make it.

If this is true, then Weinbaum's talents cannot have included a facility for burlesque. For "A Martian Odyssey" was too good a story altogether. The fantastic ingredients, even to the slow-moving silicon creature eternally eating sand and excreting bricks, all seemed quite logical possibilities to the hardened science fiction reader, and as such were far more acceptable than much he was expected to swallow. Moreover, it was written in a pleasantly light, almost flippant style, most refreshing after the dull solemnity of other writers; a style artistically valid, since the narrating was through a suitable character. Whatever his intentions, the newcomer had produced one of the few specimens of magazine science fiction capable of being measured by ordinary standards of good writing, and his readers found it immensely to their liking.

With their appreciation as a spur, Weinbaum rapidly became one of the most prolific, as well as most readable, science fiction writers of that period. After producing a sequel to the tale of Tweel, his delightful Martian creature ("Valley of Dreams", Wonder, Nov. 1934) he turned

his attention to the rapidly developing Astounding Stories, where he first appeared with "Flight on Titan" in the Jan. 1935 issue. In rapid succession came "Parasite Planet" (Feb.), "The Lotus Eaters" (Apr.), "The Planet of Doubt" (Oct.), "The Red Peri" (Nov.) and "The Mad Moon" (Dec.): all interplanetary stories in which his fertile imagination peopled the Solar system with equally fascinating forms of life.

In these his style was more sober, but as vivid and lucid as in his first, most memorable piece; and his characters all stood out as genuine personalities. The reception of another Astounding story published under the pseudonym John Jessel (The Adaptive Ultimate", Nov. 1935) showed that his popularity did not depend entirely on the reputation he had gained by that initial success. And in Wonder he continued to exercise his rare gift for humorous fantasy with his tales of the irascible genius Haskel van Manderpootz and the perennially unsuccessful Casanova, Dixon Wells.

On the 14th December 1935, Stanley Grauman Weinbaum died after a few weeks' illness. For a time his star shone all the brighter, as the magazines scrambled to publish his remaining writings, of which there were a distinguished few. Following "Smothered Seas" (Jan. 1936), on which he had collaborated with Farley, Astounding had still to present "Redemption Cairn" (March) and "Proteus Island" (Aug.), while the transformed Thrilling Wonder Stories made great play with "The

Circle of Zero" (Aug. 1936). The search for scraps was carried too far, and such tales as "The Brink of Infinity" (TWS, Dec.) and "Shifting Seas" (Amazing, Apr. 1937) were paltry things which might have been done as well or better by any of a dozen less accomplished writers. But there was nothing slight about his two novel-length stories, "Dawn of Flame" (TWS, June 1939) and "The Black Flame" (Startling Stories, Jan. 1939). Although the theme of revolt against a future autocracy lacked his usual originality, it was irradiated in new and glowing colors by Weinbaum's spark of genius.

Another novel, "The New Adam", which had been rejected by more than one magazine as meat too strong for their readers, appeared eventually in book form (Ziff-Davis, 1939) and was later featured by Amazing Stories (Feb.-March 1943) of which Raymond A. Palmer had become editor. Weinbaum's sister Helen, a writer of mystery stories, also worked on one of his abandoned pieces to produce "Tidal Moon" (TWS, Dec. 1938) with which his name was associated as a certain attraction to those who talked of his work long after his hand was stilled.

But there were some who, even at the height of this posthumous enthusiasm for Weinbaum's stories, had the audacity to suggest that he did not deserve such adulation. The favorite charges of these detractors were that he had already written himself out, become a hack like the rest, and that he had never been as good as all that

anyway. This attitude was a natural reaction to the over-eagerness of his worshippers; H. P. Lovecraft is another sufferer from the same complaint. In appraising his real merit, it must be conceded that part of his brilliance was the result of contrast with a rather dull background; Don A. Stuart was perhaps the only other short story writer of the time who remains memorable in the field. Weinbaum would not have stood out so distinctly from the cluster of stars of the 1939-43 Astounding group — de Camp, Sturgeon, del Rey, Heinlein, van Vogt, Padgett and the rest. But he would have made a notable addition to them.

The charge that he had written himself out is as difficult to rebut as it is to prove. It seems most improbable that a writer of such promise would not have been able to reach far beyond the sphere of mere ingenuity in which his first stories were so effective. We can be certain, at least, that before the advent of Weinbaum there were only a few short stories in the pulpy files of science fiction which would give satisfaction on re-reading, and that by the time he had made his brief contribution he had perhaps doubled the number.

— D. R. Smith

"A Martian Odyssey" is surely a classic if ever there be such in the field. How well I remember the impact it made when it first appeared! Compared with the stuff

being published then Weinbaum's originality came like a breath of fresh air. His effort to break away from the established stereotypes must have sparked scores of young writers who now are mature established writers of today. In short, I fully acknowledge the value of Weinbaum's contribution to the field, and often when reading an original, thought-provoking and cleverly conceived story in Galaxy, F & SF or Astounding, I think — it was really Weinbaum who showed what could be done.

And yet ... unfortunately in our field (especially on the strictly science fiction side, less so on the fantastic verge) the classics just can't escape "dating". This applies to some extent to all popular fiction, but much more to SF than, for example, to detective stories or westerns, which being in general highly artificial products anyway are little affected. But in SF, whatever the structure of the tale, unless it is merely around some story-teller's gimmick, a basic ingredient will be an element of prediction — if only in the writer's attitude of mind. And that is precisely where twenty years or so makes a huge difference. The world around us changes, and we today see things differently from the people of the 'thirties, even though it happens that we have travelled in time from the 'thirties to the 'fifties. Go back further and there is a wider gap in attitudes. Take an example from another field, Edgar Wallace's Sanders of the River stories. Highly popular when they originally appeared, well written adventure stories with quite a few laughs. Today

they are anachronisms, and even distasteful: their frame of reference (unquestioning acceptance of colonialism) has been shattered. Burroughs' Tarzan stories are more likely to find acceptance, because of their quite fantastic adventures compared to Wallace's factual basis.

Science fiction is to some extent inevitably dated because of changes year by year in scientific knowledge and social attitudes, which are reflected even if indirectly in the writer's outlook. For example, in Weinbaum's stories the heroines are unmistakeably "flappers" and really a bit out of date at the time of writing.

His ideas were highly original. I think he was the first (no, I'm not forgetting Wells) to depict aliens who were just that -- not the Burroughs type who might have four arms and green skins but were actually characters from a rollicking old style adventure yarn in disguise — nor yet just bug-eyed monsters. Tweel in "A Martian Odyssey" was a rational, even likeable, but completely alien being. Weinbaum certainly made everyone aware of a new concept.

But his human characterisation and dialog were tenth rate: in fact, like most SF writers of prewar days, he wasn't a skilled craftsman. (There has been a remarkable improvement in the quality of writing, in telling the story, since the war.) His excellence lay in conception, not in exec tion.

— John E. Henry

Weinbaum's influence on other writers is perhaps the most important test of his contribution to science fiction. Like any such relationship in this field, it is not east to assess. It is true that when his reputation was high many stories appeared which show an attempt to copy the Weinbaum manner. The most obvious element was that bizarre yet believable fauna. Where before our space voyagers met the occasional monster which merely behaved like an improved tiger or revived tyrannosaur, now they investigated creatures little resembling any known on Earth, yet designed to the best of the author's ability for efficient life in some alien environment.

It is a debatable point. There are plenty of even queerer beasts in earlier stories: in Walsh's "Vanguard to Neptune" for instance (Wonder Quarterly, Spr. 1932, and P.B. 1952), and in stories by Verrill, Merritt, Williamson, Hamilton, Neil R. Jones, Olsen and others. Indeed, Wells wrote of imaginary life forms and some examples can be found in other very early writers. But in the early 'thirties the usual treatment of extraterrestrial life was unimaginative and crude. Intelligent non-humans were usually depicted as monsters, automatically hostile to man and without apparent virtues, while the fauna (not to mention the frequently carnivorous flora) were mere stage props, and papier-mache at that. Weinbaum seems to have provoked interest in extraterrestrial life generally, and in a more thoughtful approach to the subject.

What else was original? Not the concept of alternate futures to which his flippant story "The Worlds of If" gave a catchy nickname: Murray Leinster had used it in "Sidewise in Time" (Astounding, June 1934. Book, 1950) for one, and Edward Everett Hale had fumbled with it in "Hands Off" as far back as 1881 (Magazine of Fantasy and S.F., Feb. 1952). Not the psychological themes of the other van Manderpootz stories, or the collapse of civilisation through war and pestilence and a new dark age in "Dawn of Flame", or the immortals in that story and "The Black Flame", or the multiple-chromosome genetic variability in "Proteus Island", or the natural upheavals in "Shifting Seas". His stories are not rich in even minor original suggestions.

Nor was he an outstanding artist, or even a particularly good craftsman. He did not tell a story in his own way so that it was unmistakeably his -- there is nothing striking or arresting about his use of the language, the best we can say is that he wrote clear and straightforward prose. His characters are stock figures common in the popular fiction of the day, though he evidently aimed to do better. He uses common cliches and conventions of pulp writing more acceptable then than now; the clumsy manner in which a high school knowledge of French is aired here and there is an example.

The scientific background was not remarkable, except by the extremely low standards of his time. He did try to make

intelligent use of it, and his notion of surviving a brief exposure to vacuum just as one does a short underwater swim is an illustration. It was a better guess than the fallacious concept of space being cold which was then commonly met, and shows how he could offer an original speculative answer to a problem occasionally. On the other hand, his general background was not carefully done. There is no excuse for a Maori in "Proteus Island" being afraid of the Bunyip, for instance.

Some of the stories are connected, and repetition of details links others not obviously meant to be related. With little enough effort he could well have planned a framework of imaginary future history to hold most of them, as Heinlein was to do so effectively a few years later. (Did any others do it before Heinlein? The surprising answer is, yes: Neil R. Jones. But his future history is picturesque rather than coherent.) Weinbaum was merely taking the line of least resistance for a busy and underpaid writer in getting the most out of his inventions and pet ideas.

Quite a lot more is to be said, and his work is certainly worth our examination. His contemporaries found it inspiring and stimulating, and when we understand why it was so we will have gained considerable insight into a critical stage in science fiction's development.

The FSS Library has most of Weinbaum's work: everything published under his own name in his lifetime is collected with a few more shorts and two collaborations with

Farley, in the two volumes titled "A Martian Odyssey and Others" and "The Red Peri." The related novels, "Dawn of Flame" and "The Black Flame" are together in one volume. Then there is the long unpublished novel "The Dark Other", originally titled "The Mad Brain": this is a pot-boiler with a Jekyll and Hyde theme and can be called science fiction, but only just. The only evidence not available here is the most ambitious work he produced, "The New Adam".

The shorts are distributed as follows in "A Martian Odyssey and Others" (MO) and "The Red Peri" (RP):

The Adaptive Ultimate .. .. MO
The Brink of Infinity .. .. RP
The Circle of Zero .. .. .. MO
Flight on Titan .. .. RP
The Ideal .. .. MO
The Lotus Eaters .. .. MO
The Mad Moon .. .. MO
A Martian Odyssey .. .. .. MO
Parasite Planet .. .. MO
The Planet of Doubt .. .. .. MO
The Point of View .. .. .. MO
Proteus Island .. .. RP
Pygmalion's Spectacles .. .. MO
The Red Peri .. .. RP
Redemption Cairn .. .. RP
Revolution of 1950 [as 1960] .. RP
Shifting Seas .. .. RP
Smothered Seas .. .. RP
Valley of Dreams .. .. .. MO
The Worlds of If .. .. .. MO

THE CATLIKE DINOSAUR

[The occasion of this essay was Other Worlds Science Stories' metamorphosis to Flying Saucers from Other Worlds in 1957, a development which might have been expected.]

Once we owned a cat who liked to catch birds. The cat knew that we did not approve of his bird-killing habit, and obviously knew why he was scolded when caught in the act. Perversely, every so often the cat would creep up to the house with a crumpled dead bird in his mouth and gingerly deposit the bird where the family would notice it. Then the cat would crouch cringingly, knowing that a scolding or whipping would result, yet always hopeful that the family's moral foundations might magically change and they bestow praise on the cat for the destruction of another bird.

Ray Palmer somehow reminds me of that cat. Science fiction in pulp magazines was never a particularly beautiful winged creature. But he first dragged it down in the late 1930's, when he assumed command of Amazing Stories. He accepted the scoldings of fans and continued a series of commercialised massacres of the literary flights of science fiction, through the long series of new titles, new policies, new sensations and new inanities that have characterised his magazines for two decades. And each time he scored a direct hit on some healthy section of science

fiction's life, he invariably hauled the bloody corpse up to the fans, and proudly laid it there to await a reaction, knowing in advance what they would say, acting hurt and injured when his latest kill was not acclaimed.

Now, this is very puzzling. Palmer was not alone in seeking to produce magazines that would appeal to the lowest intelligence quotient among pulp magazine readers. Thrilling Wonder Stories attempted to do the same thing simultaneously with his assumption of command at Amazing Stories. [Actually almost two years earlier, beginning Aug. 1936. Palmer's first issue of Amazing was June 1938 — ed.] A host of imitators appeared only a few months later: Marvel Science Stories, Aug. 1938; Startling Stories, Jan. 1939; Dynamic Science Stories, Feb. 1939; Science Fiction, March 1939; Planet Stories, Nov. 1939; Future Fiction, Nov. 1939; Captain Future, Jan. 1940; Astonishing Stories, Feb. 1940; Super Science Stories, March 1940.

Planet Stories has become the symbol of this entire school of editorial thinking. But Palmer was alone in his frantic, ceaseless efforts to impress upon his readers that he was Doing Good. He was developing new writers to replace the tired, worn-out authors in the field. He was creating a gigantic new market for great science fiction stories, by providing stories on which new readers in the field could grow up. He obviously had the fans' interests at heart, because he was an old-time fan himself. He harped upon

these themes so loudly, so incessantly that I got the firm impression that there was some submerged morsel of the Palmer personality which didn't approve of Ray Palmer as a whole, and the majority of his personality was aiming these proclamations at that dissatisfied minority area of Ray Palmer to permit better sleep at nights.

Of course, Palmer wasn't alone in one respect. One chapter of his scriptures was based on the theory that fans were not representative of science fiction readers as a whole, and to follow their likings would be commercial suicide. This was exactly the theory that John W. Campbell Jr. expressed in print so frequently in those days. The difference between the two men was that Campbell failed to let his theorising guide his editorial policy. Events proved the truth: that the quality magazines like Astounding and Galaxy, which the active fans like best, are the ones that survive the commercial storms in the pulp market.

By 1957, it is easy to see that Palmer's frantic claims for the worthiness of his actions were totally unfounded. He didn't create a vast new reservoir of science fiction writers. I can think of no important science fiction author who is active today who cut his creative teeth in the Palmer magazines. [Writers appearing first in Palmer magazines rarely establish themselves in others -- ed.] He didn't train millions of people to like the quality types of science fiction through apprenticeship with his action stories. This

was always the most absurd phase of the Palmer doctrines. To say that reading Shaver for a few years is a necessary preliminary to reading Stapledon is equivalent to claiming that one must learn to enjoy black jellybeans as a youth in order to appreciate caviar as an adult. The better grade science fiction magazines are not selling today in anything approaching the quantities that they would enjoy if the youngsters of the 1940's had dutifully graduated to Astounding and Galaxy after learning to love science fiction in Amazing.

The one unsolved mystery, after twenty years, is: what makes Palmer continue to nuzzle up to fans and expect affection for the commercialising and worsening of the field of science fiction? The most astonishing manifestation of his continued courtship of fans came when he mailed out free copies of his latest publication, accompanied by a long mimeographed letter, seeking support. I don't pretend to know how many persons were on this mailing list, but I hardly think it would be possible to obtain more than a couple of thousand names and addresses of science fiction readers. If Palmer expected the phenomenally high response to this mail order promotion of 50 per cent, he could hike his circulation only a thousand copies, a mere drop in the bucket compared with the circulation required to produce a paying newsstand pulp magazine.

Fans have reacted more violently towards Palmer's than the other low-quality science fiction publications in the past.

I think that's explainable through the healthier atmosphere that prevailed in most of the other magazines. The famous Sergeant Saturn, for example, treated his readers as a bunch of juvenile nitwits, which in essence they were. Other magazines simply ballyhooed their contents as exciting action stories, an honest procedure, and some of them are mentioned occasionally with affection by today's fans for that very reason.

Whatever charge may be made against Palmer, he is consistent. At a time when the entire pulpmagazine field is dwindling because the juveniles are turning to television screens and Confidential type publications, he continues to try to make money with the same kind of science fiction pulps that he was publishing fifteen years ago. His magazines get smaller and smaller, the titles change more and more frequently, his editorial discussions of what RAP is doing for science fiction become more and more repetitious.

I'm starting to feel for him much the same semi-affection that I would feel if someone discovered a living dinosaur in some remote corner of the world.

-- Harry Warner Jr.

In the FSS Library:

AWAY FROM THE HERE AND NOW
by Clare Winger Harris

Coming up again after all this time, the name of Clare Winger Harris sets us to remenniscing. She was the first woman writer to appear in Amazing Stories, which she did by winning the third prize in Gernsback's first cover contest. By inviting authors to write a story around a perfectly meaningless piece of imagery by artist Paul, he discovered several useful contributors, not least among them this lady. [Others: Cyril G. Wates, A. Hyatt Verrill -- ed.]

Her prize-winning piece, "The Fate of the Poseidonia", is reprinted in this book with her other stories of those days, consolidating her entire contribution to the field. As well as the nine tales which appeared under her name in Amazing and Science Wonder Quarterly between 1927 and 1930 there is "A Runaway World" which she had printed earlier in WeirdTales, and another piece which seems to have eluded us until now.

Of them all, we have the most vivid recollections of "TheMiracle of the Lily", whose breadth of vision was quite remarkable at the time, and of "The Menace of Mars", which in spite of its title was highly original in its approach to the already well-worked invasion theme. In fact, most of Mrs Harris' stories had a freshness of touch and a very definite human interest which still endure even if the

SCIENCE FICTION BY NEW ZEALANDERS previously appeared in *Kiwifan*, published by Roger Horrocks, Auckland. Dr. Reid is a lecturer at the University of Auckland, and author of "Creative Writing in New Zealand" (1946).

REVIEWS by D. R. Smith and Thomas Sheridan appeared in *Science-Fantasy Review*, published by Walter Gillings, Ilford, Essex.

THE CATLIKE DINOSAUR previously appeared in *Science Fiction Parade*, published by Len J. Moffatt, Downey, Cal.