

# OPERATION FANTAST

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SIXPENCE



# **Operation Fantast**

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## EDITORIAL

## Chaos



That refers to the private chaos of the House of Slater, and not the general one on the brink of which the world is at present hovering. The Gulf of Tartarus has nothing that our humble domicile cannot better. During our UK leave in June, everybody (and his dog) sent us letters, postcards, parcels, and other crud. Now we find we still have some of the May hang-over unanswered. That was because we made a futile and frantic effort to sort things into some sort of priority. We only confused ourselves more. But don't give up hope—you will get an answer yet!

The world-chaos has had an effect on us, also. Those of you who do not know are now informed that we (Joyce and Ken) are living in Germany. That is

where the army posted Ken, and Joyce came too. . . . Naturally, when we returned from leave we decided we'd better do something, for if we had to move it would be fast, and there would be no room for umpteen mags and books. So despatch has been held up whilst we have been making alternative arrangements. It will be at least three months before the new system works smoothly, and in the interim we beg your indulgence.

Other effects of the present series of critical moments on the fantasy field have yet to be seen, but we rather imagine that many of the projected magazines and books will suffer delays. And we strongly recommend those who can to get subscriptions in to the "hardy annuals" of the magazine world. The only sure way of getting a mag is by subscribing.

Out of chaos we have, however, managed to produce what we hope you will consider a good issue of OPERATION FANTAST. Some folk told us they did not consider Dr. Keller's article on LONGEVITY should have been in O.F. It was not science-fantasy. We wonder what your reception of Fred Goetz' article will be? But it is still sf-connected. Remember the message capsules of the FOUNDATION stories? Here is stage one! We feel an apology is due Dr. "Skylark" Smith, but we couldn't resist Terry Jeeves' little item. A 2000-word "weird" tale by Roger Dard was pushed out to make room for it, so apologies to Roger, too. That will appear next issue. You'll find a full load of news and notes, and some other items of interest. Still no letters, though. You'll get those letters when we get 750 PAID subscriptions, and can increase our pages. Talking of paying, there are an awe-inspiring number of the present 200-odd paid subs. expiring next issue. As a special birthday gift (it is O.F.'s third Anniversary) you can renew for 2/6 if you pay in this month. Send your PO to Mike Tealby, please. USA folk—50c. up to October 31st, to Phil Rasch, please.

Fantastically yours,

JOYCE AND KEN SLATER.



# *Browsing Thru . . .*

BOOM.

Circumstances beyond the publisher's control caused a delay in the appearance of Nova's second string, but the boom in sf pulp literature in England went on unabated. Admittedly, the average was below that we can expect from Nova, but June saw the first issues of the reprint AS and FA (our forecast in March OF was only three months out!), and various other paperbacks, such as OPERATION VENUS, by Fearn, have been steadily appearing on the newstands.

However, the boom in USA is much greater. Gnome Press are going to have their 'zine on the market in September, edited by Phil Klass (William Tenn to you), priced at 25c, strictly science-fiction. The title has not yet been announced, but we are told that at least the first three issues will appear on a bi-monthly basis, possibly to go monthly later. MARVEL SCIENCE STORIES should by now be on the American stands, edited by Ronald O. Erisman, with stories by A. J. Burke, Lloyd Eshbach and Cedric Walker. Two other magazines are probably forthcoming from WORLD EDITIONS, the first one being a science fiction mag, 160pp, digest size, at 25c, probably already available in the States. The second, to appear later, will be fantasy, but little information is available on that. Both will be edited by H. L. Gold, and content should be better than average. Yet another new 'zine is reported to be under consideration in LA, to be edited by Ken Crossen, radio writer and newspaperman. No other information on that is available. SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY is another probable come-back, edited by Doc. Lowndes, at present steering the destiny of FUTURE.

Canada also reports a "fantasy" mag. of sorts, titled "GAY LIFE," a spicy effort, concerned mostly with ghost and adventure stuff, written in what has been described as "a coy and confessional style." If this goes on we may yet see a magazine under the banner "Sexy Science Stories."

"Down Under" in Australia THRILLS INCORPORATED seems to be a steady item, the second issue having already reached us. First issue was notable for the fact it renamed THE IONIAN CYCLE, by William Tenn (Aug. '48 TWS) as CASTAWAY PLANET, attributed to one E. V. Zinns. Both issues so far have had 50pp, and cost 9d. Two other tales appeared in the No. 1 issue, and No. 2 had four stories, of which the most notable was JET WHEEL JOCKEY, Wolfe Herscholt, a rather mediocre "sociological" tale.

## RETURN OF THE ARISTOCRAT?

It now seems definite that the large size ("BLUEBOOK") AMAZING will appear in the November issue, 35c, slick paper, toned-down covers, and coloured inside illos. Most of the old features will be retained, but Editor Howard Browne comments that it "won't be aimed solely at science fiction readers . . ." but "everyone who likes good, fast-paced stories of action and adventure." Just what he means by that is not clear to us. We must wait and see, but we hope it does not mean a future mixture of jungle tales, 'tec tales, and sex stories. However, he has promised "fiction"—not science-fiction, note!—by such folk as Heinlein, vV, Sturgeon, and Hubbard. He will need it if AS is to climb back to the top line, for slick paper and color pics may improve appearance, but it will be the meaning of the words printed on the paper that will sell the mag to steady readers. Recent issues of the two Ziff-Davis mags do show definite upward trends, however! Bob Bloch's THE DEVIL WITH YOU in FA August issue would have been almost worthy of UNKNOWN, as would have been Peter Phillip's WELL, I'LL BE HEXED in the same issue. But of recent tales, in FA, best liked was the 40,000-worder YOU'RE ALL ALONE in July issue, by Fritz Leiber. This possibly has some little resemblance to FEAR, a tale you may remember, but a casual comparison will reveal the immediate differences between the Hubbard story and Leiber's tale.



AMAZING itself has had some nice tales, recently. A shortish gem on the Adam and Eve theme was **FORBIDDEN FRUIT** by Roger Flint Young, August '50, and reminiscent of the days of horror tales was **THE SCREAMING SHAPES**, by Franklin Gregory. July issue contained eleven quite good shortish tales, best one being perhaps **THE MAN IN THE MOON**, in which Mack Reynolds draws a very realistic picture of the first military mission to arrive there . . . . when the enemy already had an orbital station. September has some tales I don't like, but there are some others, best for my money being the **UNEXPECTED WEAPON**, by Charles V. DeVet, a superman story bearing a superficial resemblance to vV's work, but not so cosmic in scene. **THE ETERNAL EVE**, in the same issue, by John Wyndham, is no great shakes as sf, but is a good "human-interest" tale in an sf setting. The novel is a "Planet"-type adventure story, titled **YOU CAN'T ESCAPE FROM MARS**, by E. K. Jarvis.

Turning to Ray Palmer's efforts, I feel slightly disgusted. According to the publisher's estimate, July **OTHER WORLDS** contains 67,400 words. 400 of these are a short by 4e Ackerman, **ATOMIC ERROR**, which we have seen before, and 39,000 are devoted to **THE JUSTICE OF MARTIN BRAND**. In **AMAZING** '42 Aug. and Sept. issues appeared a story called **THE VENGEANCE OF MARTIN BRAND**, by the same author, G. H. Irwin; as far as my memory serves, apart from the title change, there is no difference . . . . another reprint! I may be wrong, but I make that issue 64.4% reprint, which is a bit high for 35c. **COLOSSUS**, which commenced in May, is continued thru July and September issues, makes a total of 79,000 words from the pen of S. J. Byrne, who Ray Palmer informs us is living in Guam. Ray also tells us he deleted some 70,000 words, and comments he expects our "amazement should be complete." It is; we wonder why he didn't carry right on deleting. This tale is an extension of shaverism, which contains everything—including that famous "kitchen sink"! But it lacks continuity, and logic, in my opinion (probably valueless). However, some of the shorter tales are worthy of attention. Eric Russell's **DEAR DEVIL** in May, vV's **ENCHANTED VILLAGE**, and Will Temple's **WISHER TAKES ALL**, in July, are recommended, and in September there are tales by vV, Temple, and Charles S. Tanner which make up some way for the faults of the superkolossal misfire.

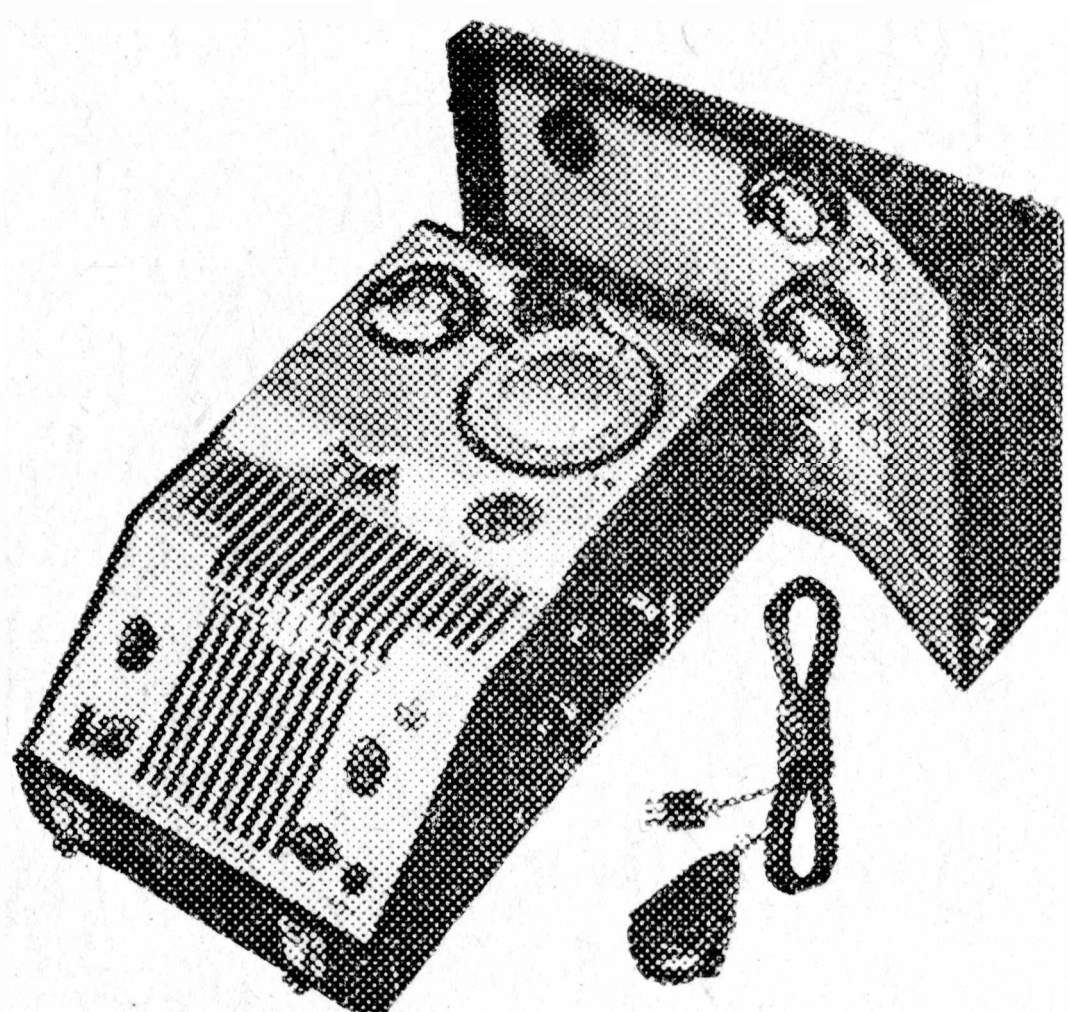
Sam Merwin keeps up a steady batting average with **TWS/SS**, and Ed. Hamilton's **THE CITY AT WORLD'S END** in July **SS** was definitely to my liking. Magnus Ridolph (Jack Vance's amusing hero) makes two appearances in the current mags, **SPA OF THE STARS** in July **SS**, **COSMIC HOTFOOT** in Sept. Jack Vance gets the lead novel in November with **THE FIVE GOLD BANDS**, an interplanetary yarn, and his **NEW BODIES FOR OLD** was top line novelette in August **TWS**. In that same issue **THE WEARIEST RIVER**, by Wallace West, a time travel tale in which folk go back to change history, and succeed, appealed to my taste more than **AS YOU WERE**, Peter Owen, which is also time-travel, though with a difference. The latter is, however, an amusing yarn, and in places almost as "riotous" as Sam Merwin described it in the "blurb." Leigh Brackett was back with a shortish yarn in July **SS**, **THE TRUANTS**, and Arthur Clarke had a good short in August **TWS**, **A WALK IN THE DARK**, which, despite its innocuous title, is a little horrific. Captain Future is with us in Sept. **SS**, but with a change—the hero of this tale is Simon Wright, the Brain, and November issue will see Grag, the robot, playing lead role in **PARDON MY IRON NERVES**. Lead yarn in Sept. was Raymond F. Jones' **THE CYBERNETIC BRAINS**, in which Ray takes two presumptions—that "dead" brains can be used as "controls" in electronic mechanisms, and . . . suppose the brains aren't dead! . . . and builds a fine story from them. But, take heed, this is not a "happy ending" yarn. A point worthy of note is that Editor Merwin infers the **HoF** reprint yarn will be discontinued now **FSQ** and **WSA** are being published; **FSQ** Summer number prints **THE EXILE OF THE SKIES**, by Richard Vaughan, a fine interplanetary yarn which, although dating back to 1933, can be honestly recommended as good even to-day. October **TWS** will carry a yarn by John D. MacDonald, **SHADOW ON THE SAND**, supported by novelettes from Eric Frank Russell and Sam Merwin himself.



I seem to have spread myself, and so I must take short bites at the other mags. WEIRD Sept. issue is recommended for LEGAL RITES, by Asimov and MacCreagh, a new-twist tale; FFM June had S. Fowler Wright's THE ADVENTURE OF WYNDHAM SMITH, a good yarn, and August has none other than Wells' THE TIME MACHINE. FN July contained EARTH'S LAST CITADEL, by Kuttner and Moore, and September was POLARIS AND THE GODDESS GLORIAN, by Stilson. AMF, now quarterly, ran Merritt's THE FACE IN THE ABYSS, not including The Snake Mother, and October will have England's THE ELIXIR OF HATE. June issue of ASF saw completion of THE WIZARD OF LINN, but vV has still left room for a sequel. INCOMMUNICADO, by Katherine MacLean, and Asimov's THE EVITABLE CONFLICT go to make one of the better issues of the recently somewhat stereotyped ASF, and July shows possible signs of further revival in Lawrence O'Donnell's HEIR APPARENT, and Ford McCormack's SKIN DEEP. Planet Fall issue has the usual collection of "action" type tales, a number of which do show signs of a change in editorial policy under Jerome Bixby, however.

## ? Wirespondence ?

by Fred Goetz



An ancient philosopher said: "There's nothing new under the sun." Maybe not, BUT—have you ever heard of WIRESPENDENCE? WIRESPONDENCE—addicts to WIRESPONDENCE, maintain that it is the noblest of indoor sports on this or any other planet. I'm inclined to agree with them.

I am writing this in my little apartment in San Francisco, quite a distance—I imagine—from most readers of the good Captain's illustrious journal. My portable wire recorder is staring me right in the face, as it were, so it should be

easy to describe. Somehow it isn't. When closed, my gadget weighs about 35 pounds, making it easy to lug around. With the cover removed, the wire recorder covers no more space than the average table model radio.

Some of you may not be familiar with the Wire Recorder, since it is a new development which made its first public appearance shortly after the war. Neither a radio (wireless) nor a phonograph (gramophone), the Wire Recorder to some extent combines the function of both. It is an electronic device for recording and EXACT reproduction of sounds transmitted through a high-fidelity microphone.

Very thin wire, motor driven, is routed through the slotted head of a magnetic recording head, there picking up sounds transmitted through the microphone. Very simple, really.

Can you operate a wireless set? A gramophone? Then you should be able to use a wire recorder. You merely turn a knob. Then you talk, sing, play some musical instrument—let your dog bark into the "mike," if you like. Reverse your wire and, having turned lever for listening, out come talk, song, music and dog, exactly as they went onto the wire.

You may record memorable occasions, such as a wedding, put the spool away, and listen to it years later—maybe on your Golden Wedding anniversary. Many happenings suggest themselves: Christmas festivities, birthday parties, family reunions, and the like.

On the other hand—and this feature I like best—you may use the same wire over and over again. You simply make successive recordings, each new recording erasing that previously on the wire. A record spool containing an hour's recording, is easily carried in your vest pocket.

Don't thumb through your dictionary to find WIRESPENDENCE; it isn't in there—yet. The word is simply a contraction of the words WIRE and CORRESPONDENCE. Instead of old-fashioned letters, we of the



WIRESPONDING fraternity exchange the spoken word by means of recording wire. Correspondence vs WIRESPONDENCE compares with Mule Train vs Jet Propulsion. Indeed, some of the cockier wire fans refer to the lesser breed—pounders of typewriters and pushers of pens—as mere mortals.

All you need is a wire recorder, or access to one, a spool of wire, a reasonable stock of the King's English and, brother, you're in. By the way, these wire spools come in lengths of quarter, half and full hour. One-hour spools are preferable, especially for long-distance sending, but beginners may wish to "warm up" with half-hour recordings.

What do we talk about? You who read this are, presumably, connoisseurs of Science-Fiction-Fantasy yarns. Was there ever a SFF addict unable or unwilling to discuss his theories at the puff of a rocket?

You'll be surprised how talking on one subject will lead to another perhaps quite different topic, and before you know it you will have filled your wire, leaving enough material for another spool. You need a little practice, of course. Your first wire or two will contain a bit of hemming and hawing. Don't let that worry you; remember, the chap at the receiving will do no better, at first. Grizzled wire veterans started with a certain amount of "mike fright." I soon got over it (and nowadays I "keep 'em rolling," as we say, at the rate of about one each day). You, too, will get used to it. Two or three rolls should put you on your "wire legs."

WIRESPONDENCE has something—something warm, friendly, personal—something I find myself unable to put down in black and white. On wire you will "meet" people whom you'd never meet otherwise. You may exchange a few wires and you both feel like old friends. Hard to believe? Try WIRESPONDENCE and be convinced.

Among my wire friends is a family who live about a thousand miles north of San Francisco. Their three little boys insist on "getting in" on the wire. Confusing, sometimes; amusing, always. Another chap in the South has a four-year-old boy who listens most attentively to his dad's incoming wires. This kid, recognizing my voice, is firmly convinced that I am hidden in the "box" and demands to know "When is Fred going to crawl out?" A neat trick, that would be. Then, too, there is THE MACABRE AFFAIR OF THE ZEALOUS ACCORDIONIST, not to mention THE BIZARRE ADVENTURE OF THE TOY BALLOON, THE BB SHOT, and THE SURPRISED WIRE FAN.

But, alas, space is limited. I must cut this short lest Kaptain Ken cut my throat—an unhappy event which might curtail my wiresponding activities to a certain extent.

Besides several wire recorders, I have a disc recording machine on which I've made a variety of recordings taken from US radio stations: Science-fiction, mysteries, comedy programs. Too, I have a fair collection of classical music, also the use of thousands of so-called popular and jazz recordings. All this can be wire-recorded and mailed, of course. Just let me know what you'd like to hear.

I should be pleased to exchange wires with you. I'll guarantee to answer and return your spools promptly. Or, if you like, I shall send wires to you on which you can make your reply. So, GET 'EM ROLLING!

Sincerely,

FRED GOETZ.

3488, 22nd St., San Francisco 10, California, U.S.A.

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*Short Story*

*By Michael Tealby*

## *Medical Examination*

The doctor's coat is a whiter patch against the creamy glare of the walls as I enter the room.

Hello, doctor! I say.

The doctor fishes around on his desk for my papers.

Yes, doctor. I understand. This is the preliminary examination for



the Deep Space Draft.

The doctor reaches for his stethoscope, which lies curled like a brown snake on his desk.

I'm afraid I shan't make the grade, doc.

The doctor has the stethoscope to my chest, and it feels like a cold half-dollar piece being shifted about.

It's my lungs, doc. I shan't make the grade for deep space.

Breath deeply, says the doctor.

I got caught in a rad dust storm on Mars, doc; you know how that affects you. I guess I got out a little bit too late.

The doctor taps my chest all over.

I still might be able to pilot a ship to Mars, doc, but deep space, that sure ain't for me.

Breath, says the doctor.

I guess I ain't got much longer to live, huh, doc?

The doctor taps along my backbone.

I'll have to end my days on little old Earth, huh?

Any pain here? asks the doctor.

No, can't say that I have just now, but I do have little shooting pains now and again, doc, like needles.

The cold disc along my spine now.

Of course, if I had been fit I should have volunteered for deep space, doc. Volunteered gladly. I shouldn't have waited to be drafted.

Cough! says the doctor.

How's that, doc? A graveyard cough all right. That rad dust sure got me. Only fit for earth now, huh?

Lie on this couch, says the doctor.

What's that you are putting on my arm, doc? Blood pressure test, huh?

Twenty years those deep space expeditions will be gone, and those that hit on extra-solar earth type planets will not return. But it's little old Earth for yours truly.

Eyesight test, eh?

R H F J K / L C V B N

r e w q m z

l k j y p

R H F J K / L C V B N

r e w q m z

l k j y p

R H F J K / L C V B N

r e w q m z

l k j y p

R H F J K / L C V B N

r e w q m z

l k j y p

How's that, doc?

In the old days they used to draft for the armies; now they draft to colonise other star systems.

What's that gadget for, doc?

Even if they find a planet, they'll be a hell of a distance from Earth, but yours truly will be right here on his home ground.

What now? Examining teeth, doc?

I guess I'll be spending the rest of my days in the light of good old Sol. I guess that rad dust sure took care of that.

What! Finished, doc?

I'll be settling down out of town, and maybe start a small farm. Always wanted a farm, doc.

Making out the grade card, doc?

Yep, I'll be taking walks in the woods, and maybe do a little fishing.

This is my rating, huh, doc?

Let's see, huh. Grade A1, huh. Grade . . . .

WHAT . . . . ?

OH, NO!

## *The Sacred Writings of Roscoe*

*Book One* - - - - *by* - - - - **r. t. rapp**

There exists a gay young beaver: Roscoe is this beaver's name, and he seems like most young beavers, but he isn't quite the same, for although the rest are brownish, or a muddy grayish-blue, when you take a look at



Roscoe, why, the look goes right on thru!

He cannot be seen in water, he cannot be seen in air, and if he didn't bite you, you would vow he wasn't there. But his teeth are keen as chisels and if you commit a sin, Roscoe will find out about it, and he'll bite you on the shin.

Roscoe watches out for stfen wheresoever they may be, from the canyons to the desert, from the mountains to the sea. He's a kind and helpful beaver, aiding fen in many ways, and he merits fannish worship on the Sacred Beaver Days.

Those Days are two in number: one's the fourth day of July—its the day when Roscoe flies a fiery spaceship in the sky. In his honour, on that date, a truce should fall on fan dissention, and every true disciple should assemble in convention.

The second Day is Labor Day, the date of Roscoe's birth, when tribute should be paid him over all the fannish earth, when all fen shall meet their fellows to look back upon the year and shall drink a toast to Roscoe in that other great ghod: Beer.

Now, Roscoe helps his followers in many, many ways; just to list them would consume about a hundred billion days: He reduces typing errors; he makes fan club laws more stable; he keeps laid-down pens and styli from a-rolling off the table.

He makes mimeos print legibly, makes typer-ribbons last; he keeps hacks from pulling boners when they're writing of the past; he climbs into crowded newstands, ferrets out the stiffish 'zines, and attracts the fan's attention via telepathic beams.

Roscoe crawls in cluttered corners where the bookstores' treasures stand and, despite the dust and darkness, guides the groping fannish hand that it misses the obscuring mass of mundane, worthless books and brings up the rare edition for which every stfan looks.

And it's Roscoe who puts blinkers on the greedy dealers' eyes so they sell their stf like other pulps, at half the cover price, and it's Roscoe who takes cognizance of what you are always wishin' and arranges that you find the mag in perfect mint condition.

And many other boons befall those true and faithful fen who agree that Roscoe merits being honoured among men, and to prove they are striving to fulfil the Roscoe Goal, submit their names for listing on the Roscoe Honor Roll.

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## ***Writing Science Fiction by K. F. S.***

Many of you folk have asked me to tell you how to break into the professional science fiction writing field. Why you should ask ME is a puzzler; when my name first appears on the contents page of a pro-mag would be a good time for me to start telling how! Just the same, you ask, you get—maybe! What I have to say may be of some use, however.

Firstly, you must have some ability. The art of telling a smooth running story must not only be learned, but must also to no little extent be inherited. If you can manage to sit down and write any sort of a story at all, which your more candid acquaintances find amusing, you may have some chance . . . . very slight!

Your next requirement is ideas. Lots of ideas, if you are going to be anything but a hack writer. You have those? Good. Now how is your knowledge of to-morrow's science? To-day's is no good—you will have to keep right up to date on current trends . . . . and forecast the next steps!

The next thing to do is think of a plot . . . . that is reputed to be easy, there being but three basic plots, and all others just variations. Okay, you have a plot, you draw on your ideas to give it a few new twists, and you can bring it to a logical conclusion. Fix this plot in a scene slightly in our future, with a logical technology, behaviour patterns, write it up and then see what you have. It may be a story, it may be crud. But at least it will give you some idea of your own talent.

For plots, ideas, and general guidance I can recommend nothing better than the little book **OF WORLDS BEYOND**, edited by Lloyd Eshbach, in



which seven leading sf writers discuss from their own angles "the science of science-fiction writing."

But all you folk who ask me honestly believe you've got some talent, and you want to know the next step. That, of course, is to get your story in front of some editor, *in readable fashion*. That latter is most important, for an editor gets many scripts every day, and he cannot afford to waste time deciphering some illegible scrawl; especially when it comes from some person of whom he has never heard. If you were a name author, you might get away with it, but being just Joe Fann, you certainly won't. So your story needs to be typed; if you have a machine you can do it yourself; if not, you must pay an agency to do it for you. There are plenty around, and their rates are reasonable. You want it double spaced, with good wide margins—at least two inches on the left side. One side of the paper only, starting each page well down, and numbering the pages. It is best to just write your title for the story on the first page, with the number of words, and your name and address down in the bottom right corner. Clip the pages together, making sure they are in the correct order—punching a hole in the top left corner and using a bifurcated staple is not a bad idea.

Okay, you are all set, you can send it to an editor, or an agent. You want to get it back, if rejected? Enclose a stamped and addressed envelope, then. Many publishers will just put your brain-child into the very handy WPB if you don't. Unless they purchase it outright, which is very, very doubtful.

The question whether you send it to an agent or an editor depends on you knowing an agent. It is always best to try and sell through an agency for, although he will take a percentage of whatever your story fetches, he has wider scope for selling than you have, and will push the yarn if he thinks it has a chance. In addition, publishers frequently ask agencies for tales, to fit some particular need . . . yours might be just the one!

If you don't know any agents, you will find the address for manuscripts at the foot of the title page of most magazines. Send your epic to the magazine you think is running the type of tale you have written, and sit back and pray to Roscoe.

And what will you get for your labour? As a first-timer, it will not be so much, I fear. You will have to take what is offered, until (happy day!) you can command a following. But in the March issue of WRITER'S DIGEST a few leads were given, and I'll extract a little pertinent data. AS and FA were then paying 1½c. per word, and that will still be a basic, I guess, although with the proposed changes rates may be going up, if you are GOOD. ASF pays around 1½ to 2 cents per word. Mag of Fantasy and SF is working on a flat rate, and will pay \$100 for a fair-length original story. OTHER WORLDS, edited by one-time fan Ray Palmer, will pay from 1c. to 3c. PLANET STORIES, now under Editor Jerome Bixby, will pay up to 2c. per word. TWS/SS don't quote actual figures, but say "good pulp rates"; that would be up to 2c. is my guess. That is a brief outline of what you can expect, and don't forget you come in at the bargain basement.

Now perhaps some idea of who wants what. Culling from various sources, including the aforementioned DIGEST, we get the following conclusions: John Campbell (ASF) is looking for good short-shorts, which are darned hard to write. In anything you submit to Editor Campbell the science must be accurate, and the quality of the writing must be excellent. His normal take is 5,000 to 7,000; 8,000 to 15,000. Those short-shorts, 1,000 to 3,000 words.

I wouldn't like to forecast AS and FA in their present state of flux, but anything around 15,000 should be acceptable. I imagine they have a file of shorter stuff. As you may have noticed, Ray Palmer uses all lengths, and he is wide open for ideas, especially those with a new twist. Editor Merwin of TWS/SS does not want any trite over-worked plots about mutants, dictatorships (remember, Cedric?), or "save the world" stories. He might consider one if it had a genuine new twist, but you'll be safer steering clear, and thinking up a really new idea.



With the new mags it is hard to forecast what they will want, but any sound tale will probably be accepted, as many new editors like to build up their own team of authors.

On the British field, Ted Carnell (NEW WORLDS) wants sound, well-based in logic, stories with a "British" slant, which will appeal to the Great British Public. The same will probably apply to Walt Gillings' (SCIENCE FANTASY) requirements. New authors in UK will be welcome, if they have something to give. You will note that such magazines as ARGOSY occasionally run a fantasy (Ray Bradbury!) and, although their rates are not high, trying them will give you experience. Don't make your tale too "advanced"; you will not be writing for a "fantasy" public.

If you intend to write a lengthy (25,000 or over) story, it may be an idea to submit the draft to an editor before you embark on the actual task of filling in all the scenes. Submit the basic story, with the tale fully told, showing the various scenes, and if you enclose that stamped and addressed envelope you will get it back; and if the editor is interested, you will get his comments and suggestions.

Writing for the fanzines may help you improve your style, and although you won't get paid (except in a few rare cases) you will generally get some idea of how well your story is received, especially if you ask the editor to print your name and address. Most fanzine editors send their mags to the prozine editors, and agents, and very occasionally an editor or agent will spot a worthwhile tale and contact the author. But don't bank on that. . . . .

Don't forget, with the spread of the sf field, and many new magazines, new authors will be needed. Editors will be looking for good writers in this medium, and your story may sell if you send it in. It certainly won't if you leave it unwritten, or on the shelf after you have written it.

At the moment Britain has two up-and-coming sf authors—Cedric Walker, who breaks into print in the first issue of MARVEL, and James Macgregor, who has THE CURFEW TOLLS coming in ASF, and SAFETY MARGIN in PLANET. Are you going to join them?

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## ***Longevity and the Superman***

By PETER J. RIDLEY.

This article might very easily have been titled "Further Thoughts on Homo Superior"; it does more or less follow on Dell Beaker's excellent piece of some issues ago. Dell's article left us with the conclusion that the superman would appear naturally over a period of many thousands of years, which statement no one is likely to dispute. But a further thought: Why should man remain passive, allowing nature to take its slow course? Why not try to speed up the process?

It seems to me that the chief obstacle to man's advancement is his limited life span. Necessarily he must refer to other peoples' deductions, to dead men's writings, to books of which he cannot be sure, to unreliable witnesses, all because he hasn't sufficient time to see for himself. He must defer to councils of men, very little better informed than himself, who blandly announce their opinions as the unsullied truth. Yet he erects on these shifting foundations a philosophy of life on which he bases his whole existence. . . . .

How is an opinion formed? Presumably from data collected both consciously and unconsciously by the senses. We start at birth with a blank mind (or at least very nearly so, though the *a priori* school of thought maintain that we inherit certain instincts and memories) and begin to collect "facts." We can divide these facts into two main classes, firstly those directly gathered, and secondly those indirectly gathered.

The first class, the personal experiences tend to colour a man's opinion much more than the indirect experiences. For instance, a man who has himself met with some kind of ghostly manifestation is more likely to credit someone else's story of a similar occurrence. It can, therefore, be inferred that our own experiences have a very strong bearing on our opinions. The second class of facts, the indirect type, cannot have such an overwhelming effect, but nevertheless must be considered. Obviously



one man cannot experience all that the world holds, therefore we use the twin mediums of speech and writing to learn of other people's adventures, and to pass on our own. These two methods of propagation are not, however, as useful as they might seem at first. Unfortunately, they have been largely exploited by the unscrupulous and can be hardly held as reliable.

In the days before the written word a man could judge with a fair degree of accuracy the truth of these indirect experiences. Living as they did in small, close-knit communities, they came to know their neighbours well, and could evaluate their stories. Thus the tale of some curious happening purveyed by a man known to lie would be laughed at, while a similar tale told by one of veracity would be credited. Simple. Nowadays we are most often faced with an inscrutable printed page from which little, if anything, can be deduced as to the writer's character. Despite the fact that we cannot properly evaluate data presented in written form, many people regard the written word as infallibly true. This attitude must lead to some considerable confusion, since it is not uncommon to find conflicting statements in print.

Thus a man must choose between either accepting only his own experiences and discounting all others, or accepting both his own experiences and those of other people which he finds most creditable in the light of his own discoveries. Neither of which methods is very satisfactory.

Limited to his three score years and ten, of which thirty years are spent in either youth or senility, and almost half the remaining time in unproductive sleep, man is under a severe disadvantage. If he could increase his natural span of life to compare with that of a planet, what then would be too big for him to tackle?

We read very often in science-fiction of men being punished by the undue prolongation of life, or their desire for death, of their surfeit of learning. Yet it seems unlikely that a man could learn everything about the Universe even in a few million years, and once man was acclimatised to the idea of such a lifetime it appears inconceivable that he would wish for death. One thing is sure: a man with such a life expectation would be able to experience personally everything that the whole human race has experienced collectively since the beginning. He would be sure of his facts, having proved them to his own satisfaction. It seems to me that the ultimate achievement of the human race can only be reached when we have found a means to induce a span of life which can be measured in geological terms.

A civilisation based on this premise would necessarily be a benevolent anarchy, in which each man would be self-sufficient. In which there would be no war, or need for war. In which every man would behave rationally because he would have had time to develop to full maturity.

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## ***Fanzine List***

ALTAIR, Mimeoed.—FAPA only. Ed. Cox, 4, Spring Street, Lubec, Maine, USA.

CENTAURIAN NEWSPAPER, The.—Centaurians Club only. James L. Thompson, 7, Richard St., Rochester 7, N.Y., USA.

EXPLORER, The, Mimeoed.—10c. or 6 for 50c. Ed. Noble, Girard, Penna, USA.

INTERIM NEWS LETTER.—OO of SFI. Members only. Lyell Crane, 23, Surrey Place, Toronto 5, Canada.

NATIONAL FANTASY FAN, The.—OO of N3F. Members only. A. H. Rapp, 2120, Bay Street, Saginaw, Michigan.

ORB.—Multilith. 6 for 75c. Bob Johnson, 811, 9th St., Greeley, Colorado, USA.

PEON, Mimeoed.—15c. or a pc. Charles Lee Riddle, PN1, USN., Fleet All-Weather Training Unit, Pacific, c/o Fleet Post Office, San Francisco, Calif., USA.

SCIENCE AND SCIENCE FANTASY FICTION REVIEW.—12 for \$1.50. Calvin Thos. Beck, PO Box 877, Grand Central Station, N.Y.17, N.Y., USA.



SCIENCE FANTASY NEWS.—SFS Members only. A. V. Clarke, 84, Drayton Park, Highbury, London, N.5, England.

SCIENCE-FICTION NEWS LETTER.—Lithoed. Free. Bob Tucker, PO Box 260, Bloomington, Ill., USA.

SIRIUS.—Mimeoed. Stan Serxner, 1308, Hoe Ave. Bronx 59, N.Y., USA.

SLANT.—Printed, irregular. Walter A. Willis, 170, Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

SPACE MAGAZINE.—Lithoed. 25c. American Rocketry Assoc., 621, Third St., N.W., Washington 1, D.C., USA.

SPACEWARP.—Mimeoed. 4 for 50c. A. H. Rapp (as for Nat. Fantasy Fan above).

STF TRADER.—Mimeoed. 5c copy. K. Martin Carlson, 1028, Third Ave., South, Moorhead, Minnesota, USA.

UTOPIAN.—Mimeoed. 25c. R. J. Banks, Jr., 111, So. 15th St., Corsicana, Texas, USA.

WONDER.—Mimeoed. 2s. for 4. M. Tealby, 8, Burfield Avenue, Loughborough, Leics., England.

FUTURIST.—Mimeoed. 2 for 25c. Red Boggs, 2215, Benjamin St., N.E., Minneapolis, 18, Minn., USA.

MEZRAB.—Mimeoed. Marion and Robert Bradley, PO Box 298, Tahoka, Texas, USA.

ODD.—Mimeoed. Raymond Duggie Fisher, Jr., 1302, Lester St., Poplar Bluffs, Missouri, USA.

(Fanzine Editors.—1000 copies of OF are printed. To get your 'zine in this list send us a copy, with a note of ten words, counted over title and address, for inclusion. Next list, December, '50.)

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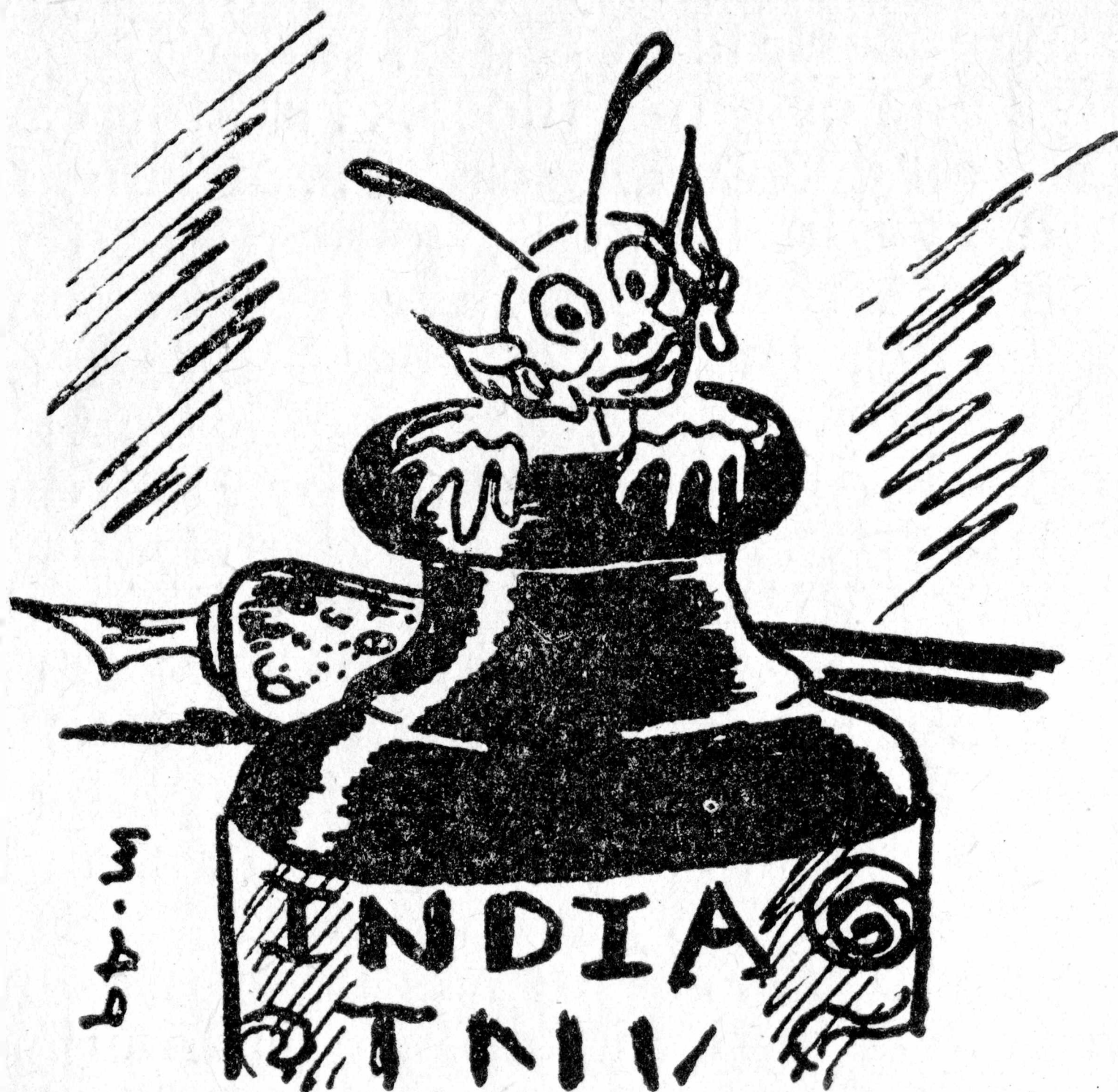
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## General Chuntering



Blair Reed. . . . SATEVEPOST, June 17, electronic calculator tale tipped to the personal angle, titled THE TERRIBLE ANSWER, Paul Gallico. . . . and May 20th issue had a poltergeist yarn, BEWARE THAT WOMAN Grace Admunson. . . . July BRITISH ARGOSY carried a Bradburyarn, I'LL NOT LOOK FOR WINE. . . . highest count for '51 sf mags is attributed to Ted Dikty (SHASTA), who is reported to have said "at least forty". . . . the NORWESCON has competition in the form of a NEW YORK CONFERENCE, which is causing some little concern among USA fans. . . . another controversial item is Manly Banister's magazine NEKROMANIC CON. . . . and views on whether amateur magazines should be solely fiction or not are being put forward by all actifans. . . . Banister's mag is an exceedingly well-produced effort, featuring weird and fantasy fiction by amateur authors. . . . Manly states this form of writing is easier for the non-pro writer than strict scifiction, and he has every intention of encouraging authors in this genre. . . . editorial address is 1905 Spruce Ave., Kansas City 1, Missouri. . . . Lilith Lorraine, editor of slick 'zine DIFFERENT, has new mag CHALLENGE, devoted to writers of sf poetry. . . . Lilith welcomes amateurs with talent. . . . write "Different," Rogers, Arkansas. . . . by the by, yours truly has a minor piece in first ish of Challenge. . . . ROCKETSHIP XM won the race for the moon, for Lippert Productions, and LP published a special "newspaper of to-morrow" as a publicity stunt. . . . both ROCKETSHIP XM and DESTINATION MOON are bringing full houses, and the former was shown for three days over schedule in San Francisco. . . . Heinlein is reported to be working on another film script, this to be a vehicle for Abbott and Costello sky- (or moon-) larking. . . . King Brothers, who shelved BANDITS ON THE MOON in /47, are reported to be dusting off this "epic," and also have an "atomic prophecy" titled "1965" in hand. . . . RKO have John Campbell's WHO GOES THERE? and a British tale by Ivor Latchford, PROFESSOR HAGGE'S PRIVATE PLANET. . . . 20th Century Fox are reported to have purchased rights to Bates' FAREWELL TO THE MASTER. . . . others being considered are vV's SLAN, Lafayette's PLAGUE, and, as a possible script for Danny Kaye, THE KID FROM MARS! . . . an offshoot of the Golden Gate Futurian Society, the Fantasy Film Group, has been formed for the purpose of showing and seeing some oldies. . . . first item METROPOLIS. . . . good news for empty pockets are notes from two publishers, who will introduce \$1 books this autumn. . . . Grosset & Dunlap will have a line edited by Groff Conklin (famed for anthologies), starting with Kuttner's FURY, and to be followed by Isle of Captain Sparrow and World of A. . . . Doubleday will reprint PEBBLE IN THE SKY and NEEDLE as dollar editions, probably out now. . . . pbs are coming fast, too. . . . Avon continue the series with INTO PLUTONIAN DEPTHS (Coblentz) and another edition of 7 FOOTPRINTS TO SATAN (Merritt), followed by Farley's EARTH



MAN ON VENUS . . . . from the Signet will come Orwell's 1984, with other "best sellers," and from Popular Ehrlich's THE BIG EYE . . . . H. L. Gold (see "Browsing Thru," this ish) reports his company will follow up with pbs. . . . . Norwich Castle Museum has manuscripts of Sir H. Rider Haggard, presented by him in '17, on show, with some original illos. . . . Editor Campbell is now editor of sf items on CBS broadcast network. . . . arising from my comment on Horace Grindley Matthews in last OF, comes word from HKB Stanton, 7 Lucas Ave., Exeter, Devon, that he would like to contact folk interested, or knowing anything about, the DEATH-RAY MAN. . . . Bradbury is now being printed in Sweden . . . . Sigvard, note that! . . . . Frederic Brown's WHAT MAD UNIVERSE will be reprinted by Boardman, London, and in pb form in USA (Bantam) . . . . science fiction looks like making a hit in France. . . . Parisian daily LIBERATION started serialisation of SINISTER BARRIER (Les Tueurs de L'Invisible) on May 4th . . . . and Georges Gallet, well-known French fan, reports that HACHETTE (the largest French publishing house) have approached him with plans for producing reprints of British and USA sf books. . . . Walt Gillings and 4e Ackerman are co-operating with Gallet on this . . . . Kansas fan Paul Healy has now received his Doctorate in Mathematics . . . . and has been presented with a son by his wife (on July 15th). . . . Mastro de Camp is wondering whether he will be back in service . . . producing a few secret weapons? . . . the mathematics of magic should confuse any enemy. . . . sf mags for used stamps is the offer of the SILVER SHACK, 1052 Cass Ave., Detroit, 26, Mich. . . . for every pound of used stamps they will mail you 2 or 3 sf mags. . . . . British membership of N3F came of age in August . . . 21 members over here now . . . . and those are all the comments we can find space for this time . . . adios, folks. . . . K.F.S.

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## ***Book Reviews by E. J. Carnell***

Once again the editor of this so-called magazine won't give me the space I need, but I shall do my best to give you the "high-lights" of the available books.

Isaac Asimov, who has been somewhat neglected, now has his first novel on the market, PEBBLE IN THE SKY, and not a reprint from a magazine. The scene of the tale will be slightly familiar to those who have read the FOUNDATION series, but this story occurs before the collapse of the Empire. A man from the present century is whisked forward in time to an Earth which is the detested inferior of the Galactic humanity. In many places, doubt exists even to the fact that Earthmen are of the same stock as the rest of human kind. On this earth the hero is dropped slap-bang into a mess of political intrigue, with a faction of Earthmen who desire to destroy the rest of the Galaxy . . . and have the means to do so; a Consul who feels that his position is lower than he deserves; an archæologist who seeks to prove that Earth is the birthplace of all mankind; and various other characters, including an Earthgirl with whom the archæologist falls in love. A nice complex, fast moving tale, just the thing to get Asimov a following from those folk who have not yet met him in the magazines. Possibly due in September from GNOME PRESS will be Asimov's POSITRONIC ROBOT series, and Doubleday has a novel (not yet in magazine print) tentatively titled THE STARS, LIKE DUST . . . which may be published next spring.

Fantasy enthusiasts who delighted in the lamented UNKNOWN will be pleased to see the Pratt-de Camp Combine in print again with THE INCOMPLETE ENCHANTER, containing three tales from UNKNOWN, The Roaring Trumpet, Mathematics of Magic, and Land of Unreason, in one story. This book will be followed shortly by THE CASTLE OF IRON, completing the series as far as it went in UNKNOWN. May we hope for more?

Best currently available anthology is BEYOND TIME AND SPACE, collected by August Derleth, and running through the last 23 centuries from Plato's ATLANTIS to Bradbury's THE EXILES. The 34 authors in this volume may seem strange partners, but they all have one thing in common . . . they wrote good science-fantasy!



Pocket books are picking up, but many of them are reprints of the "classics" of yesteryear. AVON FANTASY NOVELS three current items are good examples of the "old" science fiction, but one is inclined to doubt their value to-day. However, at pocket book prices, they are worth buying. Titles so far are PRINCESS OF THE ATOM, Cummings; THE GREEN GIRL, Williamson; INTO PLUTONIAN DEPTHS, Coblentz.

Recent British publications have been mostly Borderline books. FASTER! FASTER! by Patrick Bair, is a sociological satire, in which civilisation is represented as a train, and humanity as the passengers. The destination has been forgotten, and the entire object now is to go ...Faster, Faster...and in the efforts to achieve greater speed the passengers suffer...especially the third-class ones.

A somewhat lighter book is MY DEAR, IT'S HEAVEN, by Rowland Winn, with a collection of oddly assorted characters who find themselves in a heaven created by an Infinitely Compassionate God. Good amusing story, somewhat satirical.

Biggest event is, of course, the publication of Dr. Olaf Stapledon's latest novel, A MAN DIVIDED. The reader who expects something of the nature of STARMAKER will be disappointed, but nevertheless this work presents yet another masterly dissection of mankind for his own enlightenment, and should be placed high up in the estimation of those who can read Dr. Stapledon's writing. Which is no easy thing for the light-minded.

TIME MARCHES SIDEWAYS, by Ralph L. Finn, is perhaps the nearest thing to science-fiction at present available, and can be recommended for amusement. A reprint of Horace Walpole's THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO will be welcomed by "weird" enthusiasts, and another somewhat caustic comment on mankind appears in the form of THE ASTROLOGER, by Edward Hyams, in which a new method of foretelling the future causes the world to come to the brink of ruin (as if it wasn't, anyway).

THE LADY DECIDES (Prime Press, \$3.50).

THE ETERNAL CONFLICT (Prime Press, \$3.50).

(Reviewed by Steve Gilroy.)

The first-named of these two latest books from the hand of Doctor David H. Keller will not be considered a fantasy by most of the folk who are called "fans." The average reviewer, however, would have no hesitancy about using that label, for fantasy it definitely is.

It is a story of life, both as we dream it and as it is. Dr. Keller names his hero "Henry Cecil"...which is a not uncommon name for Dr. Keller to use...and makes him a man with a dream. A splendid dream of adventure in Spain, slaying dragons and singing stories to the accompaniment of a lute. Henry is unfortunately not only a dreamer, but a good business man. He finds his lute, and learns to play it; he finds his lady, and sings her songs. He also finds his dragon, in the form of a Spanish business man, who tricks Henry into working for him. In the end, Henry defeats the dragon, and wins the lady...and is later robbed of her by one who's call cannot be refused. That, you might think, is the end of the tale...but from there THE LADY DECIDES....

The second book could not be denied the title fantasy by the most finnick of fans. THE ETERNAL CONFLICT concerns two conflicts, both of which are eternal. The first and perhaps the most obvious is the conflict between the sexes. The second is that which occurs only in a woman's mind; the conflict between what she thinks she wants and what she really desires. Did I say "only in a woman's mind"? I am sorry, that is the impression Dr. Keller gives in his story...that is a debatable point.

His hero is once again "Henry Cecil"—I wonder what connotation this name calls to the mind of Dr. Keller?—and this time Henry is a librarian; other personalities are Hiram, a mathematician, a Little Elephant, a Chinese Dragon, the Mother, and THE WOMAN.

THE WOMAN is something special. She is eternal, a goddess in the sense of all-knowledge and all-power. But she is wilful, and knows best what is good for her...and from that arises the story. I don't intend to disclose the plot—I should spoil the book for you—but I can tell you that



it is written with all Dr. Keller's delightfully dry humour, and charm. It has sometimes a slight resemblance to the work of James Branch Cabell, but with Keller's own style.

A note about the books—they will represent gems in any collection. Beautifully bound, printed on excellent paper, only 350 copies of each are available. It is possible that Dr. Keller may permit them to be reprinted at some future date, but what collector will be satisfied with a reprint? There will only be 350 folk who will have a complete set of treasured fantasy, and if you are a collector I recommend you be one of those lucky few, not only for the sake of your collection, but because a good book is always a good book.

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### SMALL ADVERTS

Swap offer: Complete set USA UNKNOWNNS!—I would like WEAPON MAKERS, vV; BEFORE THE DAWN & TIME STREAM, Taine, in exchange. Also have Mechanics Illustrated and Science and Mechanics, many issues between '41 and '50. What offers?—Stephen Wojnar, 2728 Henry Hudson Parkway, Bronx, 63, N.Y., USA.

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YOU cannot afford to miss the 1951 EUROPEAN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION! May 12th, 13th, 14th 1951. Watch these pages for future announcements.

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### CONVENTION NEWS.

After several disconcerting letters, which informed me that the vision of a 1951 Convention was getting dimmer and dimmer, I was pleased to receive a letter from Ted Carnell, just before going to print, which contained the following "information":—

Dates for the Convention will be May 12th, 13th, and 14th, 1951. The venue is not yet settled, but will probably be in Bloomsbury, London. The title is not yet finally decided, but provisionally it will be called the EUROPEAN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION. The committee was quoted by Ted, but the best I can do is reprint from his letter. You may understand!

"Committee: Ted Carnell, Chairman; Walter Gillings, Publicity; Ken Chapman and Miss Audrey Lovett, Reception; Vincent Clarke, John Newman, Frank Cooper. Les Flood, Secretary and Liaison."

Prior to the actual Convention, Thursday, May 10th, will see a big get-together at the White Horse to complete planning; Friday, the 11th, there will be an inaugural evening, also at the White Horse; Saturday, the first day of the Convention proper (apart from being a hangover), and Sunday will see the usual meetings, auctions, talks, and general business, details to be announced later. The third day (Monday) will end up with a tour of the Festival and/or a river trip. The Banquet will be held on Saturday or Sunday. I agree at this stage plans must be fluid, and so this rather confusing statement is all I can issue...but watch the pages of NEW WORLDS and SCIENCE FANTASY for further big news!

HAD YOUR NAME IN THE PAPERS LATELY?—Probably not, but there have been things that would interest you, which you have missed.—For details of a press-clipping service for fans, write: Derek Pickles, 41 Compton Street, Bradford, Yorks.. England.