



1948

FEBRUARY

VOLUME 1

NUMBER 6

CONTENTS

The Cold War, by Dave Thomas	3
People Are No Damn Good, by Jack Speer	5
Recall, by Timothy Orrok	7
Tricks of the Trader, by Vincent Williams	9
Death, by Norman Schlecter	11
The Frumper, by Derfla Grebsiew	23
From The Readers	8
Book Reviews	13
Editorial	2

thatswhatthereisinsidethisissueihopethatycuwillenjoythemanu

SPARX is published about four times a year by Henry M. Spelman III, Leverett House E-21, Cambridge 38, Mass. This is Volume One Number Six, dated 15 February 1948. Distributed through FAPA, and by subscription. 10¢ per copy. Subscribe today! Check here means your subscription, if any, has run out.

EDITORIAL

For want of anything better to fill this page with, I'll do a bit of talking about all sorts of things.

First off, I'd like to thank those of you who have entered subscriptions. I hope that this issue does not disappoint you. The cover is not what I had hoped for. But I was unable to do much searching for talent due to a heavy exam schedual, just completed yesterday. Next issue will have a litho cover, if I can locate an artist. If YOU want to take a fling at drawing, send in your work. I need a black and white ink line drawing, with a space for the name of the mag, and the number. Artist gets two free copies of SPARK plus as many copies of the litho as he wants, within reason. Deadline for the next cover will be April 15.

I also need literary material of all sorts for the next issue. Will accept all sorts of stuff--fiction, non-fiction; humor, serious; critical, praising; in short, anything that can be mailed. Authors get their name in the mag, over their stories, plus two free copies of SPARK.

That article that was missing from the last issue is still missing. As Andy Lyon told you it is the talk that Phillip Klass, alias William Tenn, delivered at the Philcon. I'm still trying to get it. But at present, I am informed, Mr. Klass is at sea. So is a bit hard to get ahold of him. But I have my representatives at work, and hope to have it in the next issue.

Editorial musing...I wonder if the Philcon Memory Book will be out in time for the Torcon?

I am typing this page, and certain other pages on a new (to me) type of stencil called the "Supreme Crystal Stencil." They have a built-in cellophane sheet over the stencil. It seems to make for better typed work. You cannot letter through it, tho. If you use them you do not need to clean the type twice a stencil, as with conventional stencils. Type stays clean all the way through the proceeding. They cost \$3.75 per quire, but if they work out OK on the machine I'll feel that they are worth the extra money.

Since it seems to be the fashion to state your position in the current disturbances in re rap. So here goes. I believe that the Lemurian stories, and the whole furor is a terrific publicity stunt. I feel that fandon ought to do what it can to expose the hoax. I believe that the new column is an attempt to get us to endorse the hoax. I will urge all my friends to have nothing to do with the column. I will not send my mags in for review. I will urge FAPA and SAPS not to send in the mailings. In short, I will have nothing to do with rap and Graham/Phillips. But I will not ostracize any fan who feels otherwise. I think that it is a personal matter. If some one wishes to send in his own fanzine for review, that's OK with me. But I ask that he not send in mine. In re Mr.

((More on page 14))

THE COLD WAR

BY

DAVE THOMAS

Neiland pulled the hood of his parka over his head and pushed his way through the swinging library doors into the stormy world outside. At first he could hardly see; the atmosphere was thick with falling snow, and his glasses were soon wet and almost opaque. Grimly, he slogged down the main road of the village in the direction of his hut.

"Hi, Bob," said somebody at his elbow. He squinted. "Oh, hello, Jackson," he grunted. "Didn't see you come up. Quite a blizzard, isn't it?"

"You said it." Jackson's voice was dubious. "I never guessed what an asteroid winter might be like. Isn't there anything we can do? Weather control, I mean. They've got that down to a science on the Imperial worlds."

Neiland shrugged. "Find us some material," he said bitterly. "We've figured it out theoretically. We've analyzed the motions of gases with four place accuracy. But can we build anything without machinery?"

"You're right, I suppose. Everybody I talk to tells me the same thing--including the food synthesists. They say their equipment is falling to pieces. You know what that might mean." He sounded frightened. "Isn't there any way we can open up trade relations with the Empire?"

"Guess not," sighed Neiland. "We've all wondered about it. But it just can't be done. We haven't got any transmitters; we only have one ship, and that's ready to collapse; we haven't even got enough fuel to lift ourselves off this damned asteroid. And they certainly aren't going to be charitable--not with the ideological barrier that separates us."

Jackson made a disparaging gesture. "But is ideology so important? We'll be hungry soon, you know. Isn't just living more important than any social theory?"

"They wouldn't take us. Not even if we recanted, abandoned our creed of individual freedom and surrendered ourselves unconditionally to Imperial absolutism. We're potentially subversive; having once thought for ourselves, they reason, there's always the chance that we might again."

Jackson was glum. "If I'd known what I was getting into when I joined the Malcontents...if I'd only known about this economic isolation, this..."

They had reached Neiland's hut. He turned at the door and interrupted: "You know better than that. You believe as much as I do in free individualistic thought. We're here because we

((Flip the page over, please))

want to be, in the last analysis."

"Just the same, if we could leave..." Jackson left the sentence hanging as he vanished into the snow. Neiland was frowning as he entered the hut.

*

*

*

They met again a few days later. The snow had stopped falling, and for miles around the village there stretched a curtain of unbroken white. It's the price we have to pay for an atmosphere, thought Neiland. Still, I hate it.

He was going to the coal mines; compulsory miner duty had been voted in at the last Assembly. He remembered the general consternation that had prevailed when a return to a coal economy had been proposed. Now even the coal pocket was showing signs of fading. He tramped across the hard-packed snow, trying not to think.

Jackson didn't greet him; they merely fell into step and walked along together. Idly Neiland noticed an impervium ring on one of Jackson's fingers. Good luck charm, he supposed. Some luck would come in handy about now.

"I've been thinking," began Jackson. "The Empire is so centralized. Couldn't one of us get to Dictator II, and assassinate him? And then we could take over during the disorganized time that would follow. Maybe set up a new, liberal state."

"We can't leave," the other replied wearily. "Not quite enough fuel to make escape velocity. And anyway--well, it's hard to explain, but the fundamental principle of our philosophy is to allow each man a certain sphere of inalienable rights, which no one can violate.

"If we killed Dictator, the interregnum that would result would dwarf all the anarchies in history. So many people would lose their lives, their property...It's a step we couldn't take arbitrarily, without the consent of the millions who'd be affected. A question of ethics. Old fashioned, but that's why we're here, after all."

"But it would free people from intellectual and physical slavery! That kind of centralized power can't exist forever. Sooner or later something will happen..."

"The only thing that could stop the Empire now is interstellar invasion. They've got everything else under control. Economics, mass psychology, propaganda...We certainly can't do it. Biologically, as well as philosophically, we're on the way out. Who's going to have children if the chances are fifty-fifty that a child will die of cold within the first two weeks? And, anyway, people don't want to be freed from slavery. They're sure of life and economic survival; they don't want any more. Too dangerous to think. Somebody might have an idea."

Jackson's jaw was set.

*

*

*

Jackson stole the ship the next night. They came and got Neiland out of bed; he stood, shivering, on a hill near the field,

((Continued on page 12))

PEOPLE ARE NO DAMN GOOD

BY JACK SPEER

ANALESTOS: People are no damn good.

PROTELAMNES: Oh? What's eating you now?

A: I've just lately begun to see them as they really are. They--

P: But old boy. "no damn good" can't be part of things as they are. It's part of things as someone judges them.

A: All right then, as I judge them, and as any clear-thinking person should judge them, human beings are a pretty sorry bunch. They fight a terrific war, and then due to their indifference, selfishness, lack of faith, and plain stupidity lose all the advantages they fought for--

P: Is it the Atomic Bomb which has gotten you into this mood?

A: No, it's not. If it were certain that humanity is going to blow itself to kingdom come, there'd be a streak of unconscious decency in its foul nature. It's on the individual level that I'm really thinking about, and I don't just mean the letdown since the war--that only proves the depravity. Look at them in the large, any time and any place except a few rare bright spots, and you've got to admit that they're the most filthy, perverted, hypocritical, mean species in the whole animal kingdom. They show colossal ingenuity in finding ways to degrade themselves.

P: Slow down, friend. Is it right to judge them by the standards of the animal kingdom? You wouldn't judge a helicopter by the criteria for a buggy, or a compometer by a typewriter. Should you apply the standards of dumb beasts to the marvelous mechanism man, whose functions are of an entirely different sort from animals'? I'll grant that so far as human and animal conduct is comparable, men might come out morally bad (whatever that means) according to many tests. But is that so important compared to the other things that man has to do?

A: Man thinks ot's important. That's why he continually denies or tries to cover up his shortcomings in such things.

P: Well, I have to admit that. My point was that man himself is the only generator of values, and is the measure of all things. How can you compare something to itself, or make any radical contrasts between itself and a large part of itself? Like the other day a lady of my acquaintance said that men were all alike, just children. I couldn't point out to her, but I can to you, that if childishness is imputed to half of humanity, the adult portion of the other half might better be considered the peculiar ones. Now, if you admit that the animal comparisons are rather irrelevant, and most of--

A (breaking in): I don't have to use the animals for comparison. A fraction of one percent of mankind does approach our ideals, and most people, to their greater discredit, realize that they themselves are doing wrong and the fraction is right. Though the brilliant and virtuous minority--people like Jefferson, Emerson,

((Turn page, please))

Debs, and Einstein--have a sickening lot of faults themselves when you get into it. But compared to them your masses of people are no good at all--maybe once or twice in their lives they do something great or noble, and spend the rest of their time living it down. That's worse than total depravity.

P: You've been using a lot of pseudo-mathematical expressions. May I ask whether you have worked out any figures in this field? It occurs to me that you'd run up against some knotty problems unless you frankly used arbitrarily chosen measuring units to express just "how far" people fall below your standards.

A: Gripes, man, you can't be mathematical about something like this.

P (triumphantly): Then you're being visceral. Analestos, don't you realize that you're in the grip of a mood? Even if you felt like this all the time, it would merely signify that you were a soured personality. There's no absolute, objective referent for these value judgments. They come from inside your skin; they don't characterize something outside it. If they did, they could be reduced to mathematical statement.

A: The mainsprings of motivation are inside your skin, too. When, say, you decide to postpone an enjoyment, you're not going through a process of mathematical reasoning. You're weighing imponderables.

P: But you want to do such weighing while in a reasonably normal state of mind. Look at Generation of Vipers. You'd think Wylie was down on the whole human race. He even castigates your Uncommon Man. But there are passages in the book, and particularly in his vision of future greatness, which show him taking an entirely different view of human possibilities. If he didn't write those at different times of the day, he must at least have had a mighty mood-wrenching job to get his tune changed. The point is that it is a mood.

A: Anybody that praises Homo sapiens is in a mood, too, and a very peculiar one.

P: I wonder if I haven't taken the wrong tack. I can't analyze and refute your statement that we're no good until I see what use you intend to make of it; as it stands it's still up in the air, not tied down to any concrete operations.

A: A generalization can have ultimate referents in a sheaf of operations, but it's as a generalization that we live it.

P: But what do you have in view? Are you advocating race suicide, or pessimistic individualism, or what?

A: Say I'm just expressing my feelings, Protelamnes. They're an operational fact.

ifyoudidntunderstandtheabovejustreaditagainafewtimes.ihadtotwice

BLANK SPACE
FOR COGITATION

RECALL

BY

TIMOTHY ORROK

The old man sat on the hillside, smoking his pipe. The objects of principle interest, the man and the hillside, would each have seemed bizarre and out of place if surrounded by the culture which we presume to call civilization; without it, their self-consistency allowed no effect beyond a touch of the exotic. The hillside, for instance, was quite foreign to any experience of ours. It was steep, covered with thriving vegetation---but the plants were not earthly; their leaves were a healthy purple. There is was, a purple hill, sloping down to an expanse of sand, and, beyond that, the saline waters of the Lincoln Sea. The sea! It was shallow, leaden, vaporous, and, above all, violent. In the fifty-odd days of Earth time which separate this planet's noon and midnight the sea metamorphosed from a steaming demon to an icy rock which covered half the planet. It was a dull sea, on which the sun never shone directly. The shaft of sunlight which is a commonplace sight on Earth is a transient, hardly glimpsed, phenomenon on Venus. The mists and clouds shrouded the vision, and, without the aid of extrasensory aids--infra-red or microwave devices--it was generally impossible to see more than five hundred feet in any direction.

Tis land was grey, perhaps, but austere, no. During the day, when the temperature rose above the 50°C. mark, the growing season was violent, and, in this basically hospitable environment, the sudden abundance of growth was even more striking than on Mars, where the days and nights were almost Earth Normal (EN), and were much less extreme in temperature contrast.

The tremendous difference between the world of man's birth, and his present habitat, was ever a source of intense interest; the adaptations which he had undergone, physical and mechanical, was ever engrossing. In fact, considering the extent of the adaptation, he was remarkably comfortable, but that statement made not the slightest impression on most people. The very word "Venus" was enough to make all but the hardiest tourist groan; and without the six sealed cities kept at EN environment, these few would turn aside in favor of Mars, Callisto, Pluto, or some other equally hospitable place. Even the traders and the like who did venture into tropical Venus in early morning, when conditions were most like EN, shuddered at the thought of a permanent dwelling there. Phillip Reilley, the man concerned, laughed slyly at EN civilization and continued to enjoy himself. He liked it there.

He was a thin, moderately tall man; his body was wiry, active, and pale, in spite of occasional u-v treatments. One would have said that he was about fifty, and very well

((Page 22 is next))

FROM THE READERS

First off we have an apologetic note from Vincent Williams in re Tricks for the Trader:

"I am presenting you with this sheaf of paper with some trepidation. Presumably, if you find yourself overworked or not meeting a deadline, you can serialise the thing, much though I hate the idea. Also, you may, if you wish, send it back. I don't care. ((Maybe I should have.))

"Please note, here and there in the manuscript...a rather prominent tongue in cheek. I have employed my best talents here and there to the base ends of initiating some/authors/ such as EESmith and someone else whom I have forgotten...

"Handle with care. Genius at hand....

Vincent Williams"

Next comes that eminent orthographist Rick Sneary writes. Spelling by the editor. It takes to long to transcribe the Snearyisms.

"...I give you leave to rip out 37 hairs from my head, one at attime, in payment for not writing sooner...

"Cover was good, tho not very clear...one could get a general idea / about people/. Gad JoKe must be a giant. Taller than Milty, whom I remember as no short thing...de Camp looks like a hero...Hmmm. Guess all writers do. At least those I've met. (Example: vV is soft and quiet with an air of intelligence, like so many of his story people.)

"I slightly disagree with Carter. True, the Pros make the good programs, and they are what a convention is wrapped around. And poo to the con without them. But three poos and a tagir to one without fans. Me, I'd give a week in Siberia to have heard Campbell. But I'd just as soon spend an hour with Kennedy. ((JoKe, please don't let it go to your head. You already wear the largest hat in fandom. There wcn't be room for anybody else in the room with you. And you others, please stop inflating him. I'll admit he is a swell guy, but PLEASE don't make all his hats obsolete.)) And at the Pacificon I got more out of Cockroft and Tucker than van Vogt and Bradbury. Oh foo. I'd like to go to a con lasting a week, with all the fans and pros there...((Me too!))

"TAKEOFF! was very well done. I've read few fan-stories that handled felling ((sic)) better. Whoever Orrok might be he is first rate. Very good.

"Song--well I'm at least glad to read it. I heard ((See page 21))

TRICKS OF THE VINCENT WILLIAMS TRADER

Of course, as you all know, Gregor Hillem and his associates form the most important business group in the Terran sector today. This has come about through the tremendous efforts of Gregor and his crew, in spite of an early economic disadvantage and the fact that Hillem did not enter the arena of Empire trading until the early trading lines had begun to consolidate and to progress towards the tremendously effective machine that we have today.

Gregor Hillem first joined the trading system in the year 349 M--0. For five years thereafter he shipped as crewman aboard the ships of the Ungar Lines, in positions ranging from jet cleaner to chief pilot. In the sixth year, when Ungar merged with Kluncher Glip, the first of the all Verkian trading networks, Hillem left the company, to set up his own company. He had saved most of his pay, and with the aid of his good friend Iglor Hispedich Merfs, a Verkian, he amassed the sum of thirty-five hundred credits on the Terran Stabilization Board. He and Hispedich borrowed another two thousand credits, and sold stock to close friends for the balance of the eighty-five hundred needed to purchase an early hyper-spacial freighter, the Cobblie."

After patching up the Cobblie's hull and largely remaking the hyper-spacial strain-inducer, they were able to procure cargo and passengers for their first trip, plotted from the Solar system to an obscure planet of a sun about thirteen parsecs out. The trip passed without undue trouble, and, to the immense surprise of all concerned, broke even. To be truthful, there was a profit of ten centicredits. Hillem and Iglor bought a bottle of beer with it, and went through a series of dedications and the like; when they concluded the celebrations, they drank the remainder of the beer and started hunting a return cargo.

There were three more voyages of this sort. Two of them broke even, and the third suffered a deficit of seventy credits thanks to a highly unfavorable gradient which deflected the ship about three parsecs off course. The fifth, and last, voyage of the "set" was different in a highly unexpected and almost perilous fashion.

Merfs (all Verkians are called by their names in rotation--any lapse is apt to set them off on a long distance sulk) scratched the tough expanse of skin which expended roughly between his fourth and fifth arms (counted clockwise, starting with the arm just to the right of the mouth) with his second leg. Then he sheathed the claws on his foot and slowly let it return to its customary position. Gregor hung listlessly over the back of the chair and watched his companion. In the viewplate which was bolted to the wall at Gregor's left there was a large blue spot against the dark background. Hispedich picked up his fifth foot and slow-

((Turn page, s'il vous plait))

ly scratched the space between his sixth and first arms. Then he looked at the plate.

"Ship, .125 parsec distant, approaching at 7G relative, signaling us to stop. No characteristic sign. We are carrying three hundred thousand credits worth of Ingrem. Ergo..." He looked down at the fifth foot, still in position for scratching, and absently ran a finger of his sixth hand around the major claw. Then he looked up at Hillem. "I think it's a pirate."

"Well, they warned us. We haven't any armament." He turned around and ran his eyes over the control board. "they've started up their drive again." The spot on the plate became more intensely blue; began to increase in size.

Iglor nodded at the control board. "Get out while the getting's good. They'll have trouble killing our drive with theirs on full. I hope. Get the power house really turning over, and then feed the unit all it can take. You might wait until they're a matter of miles away, I guess. There's nothing quite as mean to do to a pirate as to start your unit when he's close by, running on his."

"Oh?" Hillem was interested. In the meantime, he shorted (by remote control) a dummy load across the converter output, and let the power level build up into the kilomegawatts.

"S'nasty. Rip heck out of any decent machine. But you better not take chances." He jerked a hand or two in the general direction of the plate. The spot had shifted to red, indicating that the range of the instrument had decreased. The spot was still large. "Ten million miles," read Merfs from the calibrations on the plate.

Hillem nodded, and strapped himself thoroughly into his chair. "You okay, Hispy?" The Verkian shrugged six shoulders, and settled himself a little more closely into the indescribable thing that served him as a chair. He looked more or less like a highly intelligent blue beer barrel, with long grey ropes sticking out of each end. There was a cluster of green things on top of the barrel, which might have been clumps of ferns, but actually were eyes, ears, nose, and the like. What "the like" included no Earthman had ever been able to make out. There was a large mouth on one edge of the barrel-shape, which Verkian anatomists used as the prime meridian for all their internal navigation. Iglor was designed with hexilateral symmetry.

Gregor Hillem, who looked very much like a specimen of Homo sapiens (which he was) made some sort of gesture implying "do or die" and, having removed the dummy load, threw in the hyper-spacial unit at full strain. There was a shock, of the type that seems to catch you under the chin, and disorganise all the faculties momentarily. When Gregor recovered, he decreased power to a more normal level, and clucked his tongue lightheartedly.

"Well, we got out of that one, Merfs!"

The Verkian was on his feet, nosing around at the dials, grunting savagely at the readings. "We did." The statement was short, concise, and as bitter as the Verkians ever got. Gregor stared at him for a split second, and then the meaning of the remark began to penetrate. He shut down the hyper unit. There was no sign of the pirate ship.

DEATH

BY

NORMAN SCHLECTER

The radar wave dropped through the swirling Martian mists, struck a surface, rebounded, and returned to the ship. Deep within the master computer a scanner analyzed the wave front, compared it with a theoretical pattern, and broke a circuit. Bells jangled.

In the control room Joe looked at me. "Something's screwy," he said, thinking out loud. "Shouldn't be anything under that sandstorm but desert. Some kind of complex structure down there. Want to investigate?"

"Sure," I told him casually. I wasn't impressed by the possibilities for mystery. Probably only a deserted oasis and pilgrims' shelter.

Now was I interested during the descent, as Joe steered us through the tornado of fine particles that rained on the hull. It was only when a sudden lull came, and we saw the city below us, that I knew fear.

What was it? It was old, and it was broken; sand lay in great drifts in the street, and where there had been towers there were now only shattered stumps. But the architecture...where had I seen those patterns? Somewhere, sometime, I had gazed on such a city. I felt the dim stirrings of pseudo-memory and a cold touch of panic.

It was Joe who knew. "Old Martian, by the Gods of the Great Canal!" he yelled. He shook me in his excitement. "The Old Races! The ones who built the canals! Must be one of their cities. This is..."

He stopped suddenly as he remembered. I knew he had momentarily forgotten my Martian ancestry; I was humanoid enough to make it slip his mind most of the time. Tongue-tied, he flushed and looked away.

So that was it. Of course I had seen those streets before--seen them when they were new and unbroken--but through the eyes of the Martian race consciousness. The cultural psych men had explained it, but I had never paid any attention.

Until now--until the sight of that sand-shrouded citadel had jarred my memory-patterns into life. I studied the city. It was not old; it was senescent. It brooded in the haze, as the rushing sand that had hidden it for centuries tore by above us. We were at the storm center, the dead area where no air moves.

Joe got out the portable cameras. "Don't mind, do you?" he asked apologetically, as he began adjusting his equipment. He was plainly worried about how to behave in this unexpected diplomatic crisis. I grinned.

"Why should I? As they say about that new rocket fuel, I'm ninety-nine and forty-four one-hundredths per cent pure. Don't start thinking of me as a..."

The sentence trailed off. Like some ancient drumbeat came the thought: An earthman? I? How could I say that, with the memories that even now were surging up within me?

Joe clicked a lever and aimed the lenses of his bank of cameras at the city. I glanced out. Directly before us was a gap in the wall where a long-fallen gate had once stood. A watch-tower had once commanded the area before the walls; tons of sand had crumpled its roof and cracked its walls. The material of the buildings in sight showed great splotches of decay where chemical action thousands of years in length were eating away the city's heart.

I turned away. "Joe," I said without looking at him. "Let's pull out. Let's head back into that sandstorm and forget we ever saw a city."

He stared. Slowly he shoved the cameras back and gazed at me with a troubled frown. "How come?" He finally asked.

"Oh...I don't know. You don't go digging in cemeteries, do you? Let 'em rest."

"You shouldn't be squeamish about the dead," he told me. "You ran guns to Phobos during the Revolution. You've seen death."

I didn't quite know what to say. "Yes, but...this is different. It's a people. My people." Suddenly I was mad. "They're dead. I'm dead. The whole darn planet's dead, but somebody forget to bury it. Let's get out of here before we suffocate."

He looked quizzically at me. "Easy, guy, or we'll have to report you to the Psych Department. Okay. We'll go."

Joe punched switches, and the ship rose. He glanced at me nervously, and I knew we would never be the same together again. But there was nothing to be said. He could never understand, because his race was still alive. Mine was dead, and it would never live again. There was nothing to say.

We sat in silence; the ship plunged up, through the endless rivers of falling sand.

IT HAS BEEN ADVISED THAT BEARD MUMBLING IS BETTER THAN WHAT I WAS USING SO HERE:

THE COLD WAR (CONT.)

Watching the "Spirit of '00" climbing slowly on the tip of a sword of flame.

"Taking it slow," somebody commented. "Trying to coax enough power out of the engine to get away from our gravitational field--which is small. He won't make it. We figured it all out long ago."

"He's irrational," nodded Neiland. "It looks as though he might make it, so he's trying. I should have guessed--he's been acting strangely."

The ship was high by then, little more than a dull cinder in the dark sky of the asteroid. We have got a damn small gravitational pull, thought Neiland. Could he make it?

Higher, higher...Almost against their will the men were beginning to wonder. Was it possible? Had they been wrong? Was it

((More on page number sixteen))

BOOK REVIEWS

EDISON'S CONQUEST OF MARS

Serviss, Garrett Putman (1851-1929)

Edison's Conquest of Mars by Garrett P. Serviss, Carcosa House, Los Angeles, 1947. Copy number 701 of the limited first edition of...fifteen hundred copies. 238mm. Illustrated by Bernard Manley, Jr., with copies of the original newspaper drawings.

To an experienced science-fiction fan "Edison's Conquest of Mars" is not a particularly impressive story. But when you realize that it was written in 1898 it assumes its proper perspective. For its time, it had no equal. Wells's story on which it was based, "The War of the Worlds," was not an interplanetary. It was strictly a study of the earth, with the Martians as the menace. "Edison's Conquest" is the first modern space opera.

I will not try to analyze the story in any way. I will just say that I enjoyed the story very much. It is a bit archaic, by present standards. But so does that standard classic, "Skylark of Space." If you feel that the latter is hopelessly out of date, the former will be a waste of your money, unless you are a completeist. I do not begrudge the money I spent on the volume.

THE BOOK OF PTATH

van Vogt, A. E. (1912-)

The Book of Ptath by A. E. van Vogt, Fantasy Press, Reading Pa., 1947. Limited first edition of 3000 copies. Illustrated by A. J. Donnell.

"The Book of Ptath needs no introduction to Unknown readers. For the rest of the mob, suffice it to say that it is similar to many of Merritt's works. ((Oops, two f's in suffice, aren't there.)) To go just a bit further, it concerns an earthman, who is awakened into another world, as an embryonic god (adult, not foetus), and his mental growth to full godhood. There are two beautiful, and at times predatory women involved. More fun!

van Vogt is mediocre in this work. It is not his best, and most assuredly not his worst. The illustrations are not Donnell's best. In short the book falls a bit short of Fantasy Press's usual excellence.

If you have not read the story, I would recommend that you buy the book. It is not bad fantasy. I merely warn you that it is not the best of the current crop.

EDITORIAL (Cont)

Burbee, and his troubles with the LASFS. I think that Burbee was justified, but misguided in sending Shaggy to Amazing. I always felt when I read Shaggy that it was more of a personal fanzine than a clubzine. The club sponsorship may have been financial... I don't know. But it seemed fairly evident that the contents were pure Burbee. So: I'll speak to you no matter what your stand on the matter. But I'll have nothing to do with the Z-D hoax.

The Philcon Photos are still on sale. In addition to those on the cover of the last ish, I have pictures of: Ackerman, HESmith, Tucker, Eshbach, and do, Korshak, Davis, Kennedy, Klass, GOSmith with guitar, another shot of Ley, a banquet shot. All are priced at 15¢ each for a picture size of 3x4. All are enlarged to make good composition. All my customers have been satisfied. Joe Kennedy wrote (of the pictures of JoKe) "The pics were clear, neat, well-taken, and more than satisfactory." What more endorsement do you need? Come on, all of you, I need the money. And you need the pictures. They are the best that were taken, beyond a doubt. Much clearer than the reproductions in SPARK.

If you are looking for a good, well done fanzine of rather a high toned literary type, I suggest that you look at "The Gorgon." Published by Stanley Mullen, 4936 Grove Street, Denver 11, Col, at 15¢, 1 year (7 ish) for six bits. I mention it here because it happened to come this morning, reminding me of its quality. 'Tis a very fine mag, Stan.

Inflationary note... Since SPARK is getting bigger and bigger, and since the cost of paper is getting higher and higher, I am forced to announce that in an effort to keep my losses at a low level the price of a copy of SPARK is hereby advanced to ten cents. All present subscriptions will be filled at the old rate, of course.

If you feel the urge to advertize something or other in SPARK there is almost unlimited space available at a price of \$1.50 per page. Circulation in the neighborhood of 125.

Next issue is due to be in the mails on or about the middle of May. I hope that I will be able to make this date.

That's all that I can think of to say to all you beautiful people this time period

FOR RESULTS

ADVERTIZE IN

SPARK

FOR SALE

All items are in good to excellent condition; subject to prior sale; and postpaid.

ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION				WEIRD TALES			
1946	Feb	Fair	\$.20	1945	Sep	Poor	\$.10
	Jul		.25	AMAZING STORIES			
	Oct		.25	1945	Dec		.25
1947	Dec		.25	1946	May		.25
STARTLING STORIES					Sep		.25
1942	Nov		.35		Dec		.25
1946	Sum		.20	1947	Feb		.25
1947	Jan		.15	SCIENCE FICTION STORIES			
	Mar		.15	1943	Jul		.20
PLANET STORIES					Apr	Fair	.15
1945	Win		.25	FANTASTIC ADVENTURES			
1946	Win		.20	1945	Dec	No back cover	.15
1947	Win		.20	1946	Feb	No back cover	.15
	Spr		.20		May	No back cover	.15
ASTONISHING STORIES				FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES			
1941	Apr	Fair	.20	1939	Sep-Oct	First issue	\$2.00
DYNAMIC SCIENCE STORIES					Nov		.75
1939	Apr-May	Fair	.25		Dec	Important page miss- ing	.65
THRILLING WONDER STORIES				1940	Jan		.75
1941	Mar		.35		Mar		.75
	Aug		.35		Apr	Fair	.65
1942	Oct	No front cover	.20		Oct	Fair	.65
	Dec		.35	1941	Aug		.50
1943	Feb	No front cover	.20	1942	Feb		.50
	Jun	No front cover	.10		Jul	Poor	.25
	Fal	Fair	.25		Apr		.50
1945	Spr		.20		Aug		.50
1946	Spr		.15	1943	Mar	No back cover	.25
	Sum		.15	1945	Mar	Fair	.20
1947	Feb		.15		Sep		.25
	Apr		.15		Dec		.25
	Dec		.15	1946	Apr		.25
1939	Aug		.75		Jun		.25

If you do not want to buy, but would rather trade, I need certain issues of UNKNOWN, ASTOUNDING, FFM. I'll send a list on request.

FANTASTIC NOVELS			
1940	Jul	First issue	\$2.00
	Sep		.75
1941	Apr	No front cover	.50

DAVE THOMAS
31 LINDMAN STREET
CAMBRIDGE 38, MASS.

THE COLD WAR (CONT)

escape? Neiland grinned sardonically in the darkness. Each of them probably would have troed it if they'd dared, he thought. Maybe I would have, if I had been brooding about things the way Jackson did.

The ship was slowing. "Just a little more," said Neiland, not realizing that he was speaking aloud. Some one was cursing monotonously in a low tone.

Then all motion stopped. For a timeless second the spark that was the ship hovered motionless, almost in the zenith. Then, slowly, imperceptibly at first, it began to drift back. "No good," somebody muttered. "Used up all the fuel. Hasn't got any left to break his fall. Poor guy." Neiland stared, hypnotized, at the ship. It was dropping faster...faster...

It was three hours before the wreckage cooled enough to allow a search. The first streamers of dawn were cold in the sky when they were through. All that was left of Jackson was an almost unrecognizable mass of charred flesh and an old fashioned good luck charm. It hadn't been good enough.

*

*

*

"Going to work early?" asked Neiland's wife.

"They've doubled the shifts," he answered briefly. "The pocket's about done for. Everybody's working hard. But it won't be for long."

He scowled at the wall of the hut as he adjusted his parka. No, it wouldn't be for long. Winter was still far in the future; perihelion was almost a year away. He knew that no one would be alive on the asteroid when it came.

"And some fools thought the atomic bomb was the ultimate weapon!" he said, to nobody in particular.

"Why, what is?" asked his wife.

Sociology, of course. Nobody knows just how deadly a weapon the social sciences can be. We've had a glimpse." He opened the door and braced himself against the blast of icy air. "What good is a theoretical knowledge of the principles of an atomic bomb, if you haven't got the resources to build it?" Laughing at the concept, he went out, closing the door behind him.

Somewhere, he thought, somewhere there must be a God, who sits, and sees, and records. A God that will make up for the cold and the darkness; for the childlessness; for Jackson; for the reality of the failure that becomes clearer every day. This couldn't really be happening; freedom couldn't be stifled like this. Blessed be those that are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

But he shivered as he thought it. A raw wind was blowing, and snow was beginning to drift down from the grey sky. It was cold...cold...

THE END

BOOK SALE

This sale is run in two sections. The first is an auction. I have three books for sale which ought to bring a fair price. So I've set a reserve price on them. You send in your bids. Then, on the tenth of March, or ten days after I get my FAPA mailing, whichever is later, I'll announce to the winner that his money is due. All sales will be made at \$.25 over the next lower bid. All losing bidders will be notified. Send no money...just bids

The Eye and the Finger	Wandrei	\$6.00
The Third Omnibus of Crime	Sayers	\$2.50
Blue Ribbon Books, nd,	clean copy	
A House-Boat on the Styx	Bangs	\$1.50
First Ed., fair condition		

* * * * *

PAPER-BOUND BOOKS, ETC.

Merritt:

Burn Witch Burn	\$.30
" " " Fair	.25
7 Footprints to Satan	.30
The Moon Pool	.60
Creep Shadow Creep Fair	.30
Dwellers in the Mirage	.35
" Fair	.25
The Face in the Abyss	.35

The ship of Ishtar	.30
" Fair	.25

Lovecraft:

The Dunwich Horror	.40
The Weird Shadow over Innsmouth	.50
" Fair	.35

Armed Forces Editions:

Sleep No More	.25
Sea Ghost St of MRJames	.35
King Solomon's Mines	.25
Lady into Fox Garnett	.20
Dohovan's Brain Siodmak	.20
The Mysterious Stranger Twain Fair	.20
The Enchanted Voyage Nathan	.30
The edge of running water Sloane	.35
The Passionate Witch Thorne Smith	.25

Armed Forces Editions:

The War of the Worlds	\$.30
Joe, the wounded tennis player Thompson fair	.20
Eddy and the Archangel Mike Benefield	.25
When Worlds Collide	.25
The time machine Wells Fair	.20
Tall Tale America Blair	
"A legendary hist of our humorous heroes"	.30
Lost Worlds White Non- Fict---Archeology	.30
Mystery Ship Bryan About the Marie Celeste	.25
Myths after Lincoln Lewis Non-Fiction	.25

Miscellaneous:

Out of this World Old Ed	.30
" fair	.25
" New Ed	.30
Saki Sampler	.30
Rocket to the Morgue Complete edition	.40
Pocket book of STF DAW	.35
Waltz of Death Maxon	.30
Lost Horizon Hilton	.25
The Bishop's Jaegers	.25
The Stray Lamb	.30
The Atomic Age Opens PB	.25

((More on next page))

BOOK SALE (CONT.)

The Pocket Companion		The Saint's Choive of Imposs-	
Cont The Invisible Man	\$.20	ible Crime (Stf)	\$.20
The Saint's Choive Vol 1	.20	Atomic Bomb Jameson	.20
Death from Nowhere Towne	.15	Barnaby Quarterly #3	.20
Let's Neck	.10	Rocket to the Morgue	
* * * * *		Cut Ed	.10
She Haggard Cheap bound edition			\$.30

that sell the book now for the mag. i hope that all this junk will sell it just

MAG SALE

ASTONISHING STORIES	
1941 Nov Fair	\$.20
1942 Oct	.20
Dec	.20
1940 Jun No good at all	**

SUPER SCIENCE STORIES	
1941 Jan Torn cover	.20
1942 May	.25
1943 Feb	.20
May	.20

SCIENCE FICTION	
1941 Jun	.30

FUTURE FICTION	
1941 Apr Fair	.20
? Nov Front cover only	**

FUTURE COMB W SCI FICT	
1941 Oct Fair	.25
1942 Apr	.25
Jun	.25

FUT FANT & SCI FICT	
1942 Oct Fair	.15
Dec	.20
1943 Feb	.20

SCIENCE FICTION STORIES	
1943 Apr No covers	**

FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES	
1942 Sep	.65
Nov	.50
Dec	.50
1943 Mar Fair	.35

FFM (Cont.)	
1946 Apr	\$.25
Jun	.25
Dec	.25

SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY	
#1 Fair	.75
#7	.40
#8	.35

COMET	
1941 Mar Fair	.25
Jul (EESmith)	.35

PLANET STORIES	
1939 Win First issue	.80
1941 Fal	.50
Win	.50
1942 Spr	.50
1946 Sum Fair	.15
Fal	.20

THRILLING WONDER STORIES	
1939 Jun Fair	.40
1946 Spr	.15

STARTLING STORIES	
1946 Sum	.15

UNKNOWN WORLDS	
1943 Oct	.50

FANTASTIC ADVENTURES	
1940 Mar No front cover	.30
1946 Nov	.25

((More on next page))

MAG SALE (CONT)

AMAZING STORIES			
1926	Jul	No back cover	\$1.25
1927	Feb		1.75
	Apr		1.75
	May	Fair	1.50
1928	Jan	Corner of f cov missing	1.25
	Feb		1.50
	Aug	Skylark	1.50
	Sep	Coupon cut, but enclosed	1.25
	Sep	Coupon missing	1.00
	Oct		1.50
	Dec		1.00
1929	Oct		1.00
1930	May		1.00
1932	Oct		.50
1946	Aug		.25

AMAZING STORIES QUARTERLY			
1928	Sum		2.00

SCIENCE WONDER QUARTERLY			
1929	Fal		1.75
1930	Win		1.50

WONDER STORIES QUARTERLY			
1931	Spr		1.50
	Sum		1.50

AIR WONDER STORIES			
1929	Jun	First issue	2.00

SCIENCE WONDER STORIES			
1929	Nov	Fair	1.00
1930	Jan	Poor	.75

UNKNOWN WORLDS (Brit)			
1942	Oct		.35

ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION (Brit)			
1941	Mar		.35
	Nov		.35
1942	Jan		.35
	Oct		.35

ASTOUNDING STORIES			
1933	Mar		1.00

ASTOUNDING STORIES (Cont.)			
1934	May		\$1.00
	Jun		1.00
	Jul		1.00
	Oct	Punk	**
1935	Oct	Poor	.50
	"	No front cover	.20
1937	Jun	No front cover	.20
	Sep	EESmith	.75
	Dec	"	.75
1938	Feb	" Poor	.25
	Oct		.60
1939	Feb		.50
	Jun	No front cover	.25
	Oct	EESmith	.65
	Nov	" Poor	.40
1940	Mar		.45
1941	May		.45
	Jun		.40
	Jul		.40
	Nov	EESmith	.60
1942	Mar		.40
	Jul	No front cover	.20
	Aug		.40
	Sep		.40
1943	Oct		.35
1944	Nov		.35
1945	Jan		.35
	Aug	null-A	.40
	Sep	"	.40
	Oct	"	.40
	Nov		.35
	Dec	Fair	.30
1946	Jan	Poor	.15
	Mar	Fair	.20
	May		.35
	Apr	Fair	.20
	Jun		.25

MARVEL SCIENCE STORIES			
1939	Aug	Punk	**

All books and mags offered subject to prior sale; all in good condition unless noted; all mailed postpaid. Items marked ** are free, to the first \$5 orderer asking any of them. If you don't like my prices, make a bid. Might be good enough.
Send all orders, with cash, check or money order to editor.

TRICKS OF THE TRADER (CONT)

"Your hyper unit," grunted Hispedich sadly, "had gotten us into trouble. We've lost our locality."

"What?"

"Locality. Local conditions, local charge, local--locality. Now you can get us back. Your hyperspace is a very simple concept. Outside of norm space, on the borders of--I don't know--the three dimensional cross-section which we refer to as "the universe"--we can go faster, with less effort, and we can take advantage of the fancy bends and gradients in the fourth dimension of norm space--the simple cross-section, mind you. But always, when we wish to get out of norm space, we raise our potential. When we wish to return we lower it once more. Now, Buster, you--we--have blasted ourselves over the "energy hill" into the next valley. You can get us back." Iglor stamped back to the rear of the control room, opened a cupboard, and found a bottle of the something that the Verkians call Dyrbl. It is composed largely of methyl ethyl ether, and Merfs could get very drunk on it with no fear of a hangover. Hillem scowled at him.

((And, with that scowl, we leave our two jolly ~~friends~~ friends until the next issue. Ed))

ihopethatyouwilllastuntilthenextishihaveputthemssintheiceboxihave

STRANGER CLUB

If any of you fen happens to be in or near Boston on a Sunday, you might, if it's the right Sunday, be interested in visiting/joining the Stranger Club.

The Stranger club is just a discussion group. We meet once a month, at the home of one of the members, for a gabfest. The meetings run from 3-12 PM, plus or minus. They normally are on the first or second Sunday of the month.

If YOU are around the neighborhood, drop me a line, and I'll let you know when the next meeting will be. We are always gald to have any sort of human visitors. (Please check all BEMs at the door.)

Regular attendees include Art Widner, Chan Davis, Harry Stubbs, Dave Thomas, Tim Orrok, Boff Perry, Bill Mason, John Pomeroy, Sam Bowne, and many other well known and not so well known fen. If you know of any other fen in the neighborhood, just send me their names, and I'll put them on the mailing list.

Henry Spelman

ihopetoseeyouatastrangermeetingso

onisuredoandsodoalltheothersthey

SACRED TO THE MEMORY
OF:

LETTERS (Cont)

so many remarks. Too-bad they didn't have enough back of them to really do anything. My moto is don't laugh at something (make fun of) unless you want to fight it...

"THE LITTLE FLOWER. Good humor. Hehehe. I have always wanted a robot, or maybe a lion that would do what I said. Did you ever think how important you would be with a lion that could understand English, and and would do what you said? Great dream stuff. Here, have a puff...

"Goodby, and a happy Ground Hog and palmer day.
Rick"

Having dispensed with the interpreter, we hear from Leslie Hudson.

"...a very good job. That photo cover was OK tho some of the pics could have been a little plainer. I realize tho the conditions under which they must have been taken. ((No, I was sober at the time.)) Good idea for a cover anyway.

"Carter's article was interesting and just about right too, I think.

"TAKEOFF! was fair.

"/Song/ was good, really funny.

"Book review was all right.

"Haven't read anything by Williams before, but THE LITTLE FLOWER was excellent. In fact, I believe it was the best thing in the mag...

Leslie Hudson"

Next one of the sages of Milwaukee, Bob Stein.

"SPARK isn't a bad zine..not particularly wunnerful either tho. I guess I just don't go for fanfiction.

"PS pardon me. Your fanfiction above average.
Stein"

And Tom Jewett.

"...Carter's article was okay, but could have been further developed. The fiction didn't appeal to me. The 'A-ma-zing' verse was good. Book review fine. The cover was okay, if a bit blurred in places...

Tom Jewett

And that's all I have room for, unless I use some quickies as fillers later. Thanks for all the fine letters I have received.

RECALL (CONT)

preserved. One would have been very wrong. Reilley remembered the day that the United Nations was founded. If his memory had been a little more certain as to the exact date of his birth, he would have boasted about it, but, as a scientist of considerable standing, he felt the need of accurate data before making any foolish statements. His feelings on the matter were not strong enough to make him consult his REFLEX (universal reference-tape library-index) about it.

His face was built on a definitely angular and jutting mould; his eyebrows overhung his deep-set eyes in a manner which was strongly reminiscent of the neanderthal; his chin jutted out in a way which most definitely was not. The rough contour of the latter was concealed by a profuse and badly trimmed white beard. Reilley's eyes were blue and penetrating; quite the most remarkable feature of his body. They were acute, well-trained eyes, and Reilley seldom missed anything that was going on, through their default.

So far, there is little which might be called excessively out-of-the-way in Reilley's appearance. A striking man, perhaps, but not a bizarre one. His dress and action completed the picture, and produced the effect. It was very warm--even for Venus--and Reilley was wearing a pair of ragged green shorts, very pale from years of wear and washing. Around the belt loops straggled a wide compartmented belt, finished in some sort of highly resistant leather-like plastic. It contained and supported a great many gadgets--first aid kit, radio, ammunition, and a huge old fashioned .45 which was protected against moisture and fumes by a monomolecular film of one of many novel new synthetic resins. He was fully prepared for any eventuality.

It might be supposed that, as he sat there on the hillside smoking, he was considering some weighty scientific problem, perhaps estimating the amount of ultrasonic power necessary to blast the mists of Venus out of existence, or deliberating on the subject of a geological survey of the neighborhood. He was not. With the tremendous concentration which only a highly talented mind can bring to bear on a problem, Phillip Reilley was digging a small hole in the ground with the big toe of his left foot. Occasionally, he would pause briefly to suck on his pipe and exhale a tremendous cloud of vile vapor. He was perfectly content with his idleness for the moment; he had been eseful--slavishly so-- for a good many years of his life, and he probably would be again in due time. But, for the moment, he was quite happy to sit and dig.

It was at night that Reilley's work was done, during the long and not too dreary period when temperatures hovered for EN months far below the freezing point. Then, confined to the house most of the time, he would break out the tools of his trade as physicist and engineer. By the time sunrise came around, he had usually produced several major contributions to the comfort and well-being of the system. Even now, the

((More yet on page 25))

THE FRUMPER

BY

DERFLA GREBSIEW

This is the story of a man. No special sort of man he, such as you might meet any day on the pages of "Frightfully Fantastic Futuristic Fascinating Fantasies," but rather just a plain simple "little man." Now I may caution you, dear reader, away from the mistaken impression that our hero was a little man physically, for he was of normal height ((could this be Ashley?? But the author does not know of him. Gad. Esp.)); nor was he a "little man mentally, being of IQ 96 ((whew, I guess that clinches it. It ain't Ashley)). It was just that after meeting him one was sure that he had met a "little man."

Now, on the day that our story starts, our little man, just as all other good little men, received a very official letter that spaketh unto him and said "Greetings...come in unto me." Yes, dear reader, you guessed it; our little man was drafted, just as all other good little men.

He appeared at his draft board, was interviewed, classified, and, as if by the will of God, sent to the United States Naval Training Center, Great Lakes, Illinois, there to undergo ~~any possible/possible/~~ the finest training a man may receive. At boot camp, true to his title of "little man," he received neither any commendations, nor any happy-hours. In short, he was just an average boot, and at the conclusion of his training he, along with many others, received his classification interview.

Now it might be remarked that the interviewer, one Sp(C) 2/c Thaddius Mutsieup, had been married but one short week, and had far better things to think of than the boots in endless stream across his desk, even as you and I, dear reader, in the same situation. So, when our little man appeared before him, he merely asked name, age, and occupation. He thought nothing of the answers received, merely writing them mechanically in the appropriate balnks. And thus he wrote on the face of our little man's service jacket "this man is a qualified, A-1 Frumper."

Those of you who are of religious frame of mind may say that the next was willed; those of you who are coldly scientific will say it was just by chance; nevertheless our little man was sent, by some inscrutable quirk of Bupers, directly to an overseas embarkation point; thence but a short step to a berth aboard ship.

When he came aboard his ship he was received by the Chief Boatswains Mate ((CBM henceforward)), who upon seeing the large inscription on our little man's service jacket..."this man is a qualified A-1 Frumper" decided that this was rather

((Turn to page 24))

THE FRUMPER (Cont)

an unusual recruit, and took it upon himself to tell the captain. Now we know perfectly well that the CREW, one Chief Java X Cup, had no idea at all what a frumper was. However, wishing to make a good impression on the Captain, as he was striking for Warrant Officer, he determined that since this might be important, he would be the first to tell the Captain. He did, and the reaction was just as you, dear reader, have guessed. The Captain, a 120 day wonder--he flunked one month, and had to repeat--sent for our little man. Alas, I dread to say it, this Captain was utterly unlike the usual run of Naval Officers. He didn't have the slightest idea what a frump, or, for that matter, a frumper, was! He determined to find out the easy way. He put the entire facilities of the ship at the disposal of our little man, and ordered him to make the "biggest damned frump" that had ever been made. Our little man's eyes lit up, even as yours, dear reader, and mine would in like circumstances.

He proceeded forthwith, under forced draft, to the metal-smith shop. There he procured a sheet of 16 guage aluminum. (It might be added here that our little man would much rather have had 18 guage, but there was a war on...) Taking this sheet, he trimmed it to a perfect square eight feet on a side. Then he folded the opposite corners of the sheet together, forming an isosceles triangle just eight feet on a side and approximately 11.31368 feet on the hypotenuse. Then he again folded the two acute base angles of 45° together forming a smaller triangle about 5.65684 feet on a side, and 8 feet on the hypotenuse. This he did three times. Our little man, being a "little man", did not realize that all this mathematics (omitted from the text) was involved. He just did his work like the good craftsman that he was. Next he grasped the mass of metal at just the right point, and drew them apart with two steam winches. He thus unconsciously created, without knowing it, one of what we call one of the Platonic Solids. Then he brazed and silver soldered the joints to form a tightly sealed airtight, watertight, lighttight tetrahedron. (I might remark at this point that the tetrahedron was not nearly as tight as your author is, gentle and dear reader.)

He polished his Platonic Solid platonically, but with fervor, first with steel wool, then with emery cloth, tapering off to crocus cloth and jewelers' rouge, until it shined like a babies ((censored. This is a family magazine.)).

He then announced to the Captain that the frump would be ready in about three hours. The Captain invited all his friends, and a few admirals to see the show. The ship sunk three Plimsol marks from the load of brass.

Our little hero took over the fantail. (To the unit-aite, the fantail is the ((censored))-end of a ship.) He put his (platonically) loved masterpiece in a vise, with ample layers of asbestos between it and the jaws of the vise. He heated the tetrahedron first with a blowtorch through red, and orange heat. Then he shifted to oxy-acetelene torches, and heated it through yellow and white to that bluish white that

((more on page the 25th))

RECALL(Cont)

one main room in his house was dominated by the traditional clutter of his workbench. The entire rear wall of the room was a mass of bench, cupboard and drawer. There were two comparatively small windows, quite overshadowed by mountains of equipment. Three large multi-dialed gadgets sat by themselves on the bench doing nothing. A large, immensely complicated vacuum tube lay on one corner of the bench, with heavily insulated cables trailing away from it. Across the room was a section just opposite in character; this was just a "set." A strip of thick rug, several extra-luxurious chairs, and a mahogany table were the main props. Reilley used it, after shaving, washing, and dressing in "civilized" clothes, when had was forced to use his televisior. Very few of Reilley's associates had any idea that the rest of the house was not on the same elegant scale.

His bed, stove, refrigerator, sink, toilet, and all the other necessities of life were of unpretentious design, and scattered about the room in out of the way places. With the power plant and garage-hanger in the el, it was a very capable sort of house, With the aid of a door system which was actually equivalent to an air lock and an air conditioner he was able to keep himself from alternately freezing and parboiling. He had decorated it largely with gadgets, but there were several fine reproductions of paintings, a few etchings, and some photographs on the walls--one of the latter of the crew of the "Tiny Tim Two," the first interplanetary rocket. With luck Reilley might have been aboard. That honor had been denied him; he had been far too valuable to waste on a possible failure.

Outside, Reilley lurched to his feet, and retired to his house. In the distance, he could hear the first wails of one of the squalls which were so increasingly common as sunset approached. He stood at the door and watched the scud take shape from the dull shadow of the mist, and go scampering across the low sky. As the visibility lifted momentarily, he saw the solid, trunk-like body of the storm approaching. He stepped inside and shut the door.

this is the first of a series by tim about phillip reilley watch for more!!!

THE FRUMPER (Cont)

is just barely below the melting point.

Summoning the Captain and all the observers to come and observe, he snatched up the near-frump, and ran back (he was not yet quite salty enough to run aft) to the extreme stern. Then, oh moment of all moments, he leaned as far as he could over the side of the ship, and let drop his master-piece. As it hit the water in a cloud of steam, there was the most terrific pfruuuump ever heard!

well? nono dont come at me with that knofei just published it he wrote it

P.S. I wrote it, and I'm glad I did. D. G.

DON'T FORGET THE

TORCON

To be held in Toronto, Ontario from 3-5 July 1948!

Send that dollar for TORCON membership to:

Ned McKeown
1398 Mt. Pleasant Road
Toronto 12, Ontario
Canada.

Plans proceed apace. The first issue of TORQUE is out with the first details. Don't wait another day. Get that buck in the mail to Ned today!

ETC.

The Avon edition of "The Lurking Fear," by H. P. Lovecraft is on the stands. Contents: The Shunned House, The Lurking Fear, The Colour Out of Space, The Nameless City, Pickman's Model, Arthur Jermyn, The Unnamable, The Call of Cthulhu, The Moon-Bog, Cool Air, The Hound. A very worthwhile collection. It is, I believe, the first HPL collection that has no forward, introduction, or preface. All there is is the usual inside-the-cover blurb. Avon Library #136.

"Fantasy Book", the new promag is out, and not at all bad. Will have to wait a while before I can say how I like the way it's going. First issue is all right.

"Hercules, My Shipmate," by Robert Graves, Creative Age Press, is another Graves historical romance. Has gods and goddesses all through it, in a matter of fact manner. Fair amount of sex. If you can get it, as I did, at a clearance for \$.50, it might be worth the price. List is \$3. Published in 1945.

This is the end for SPARX number 6. See you again in three months, I hope.