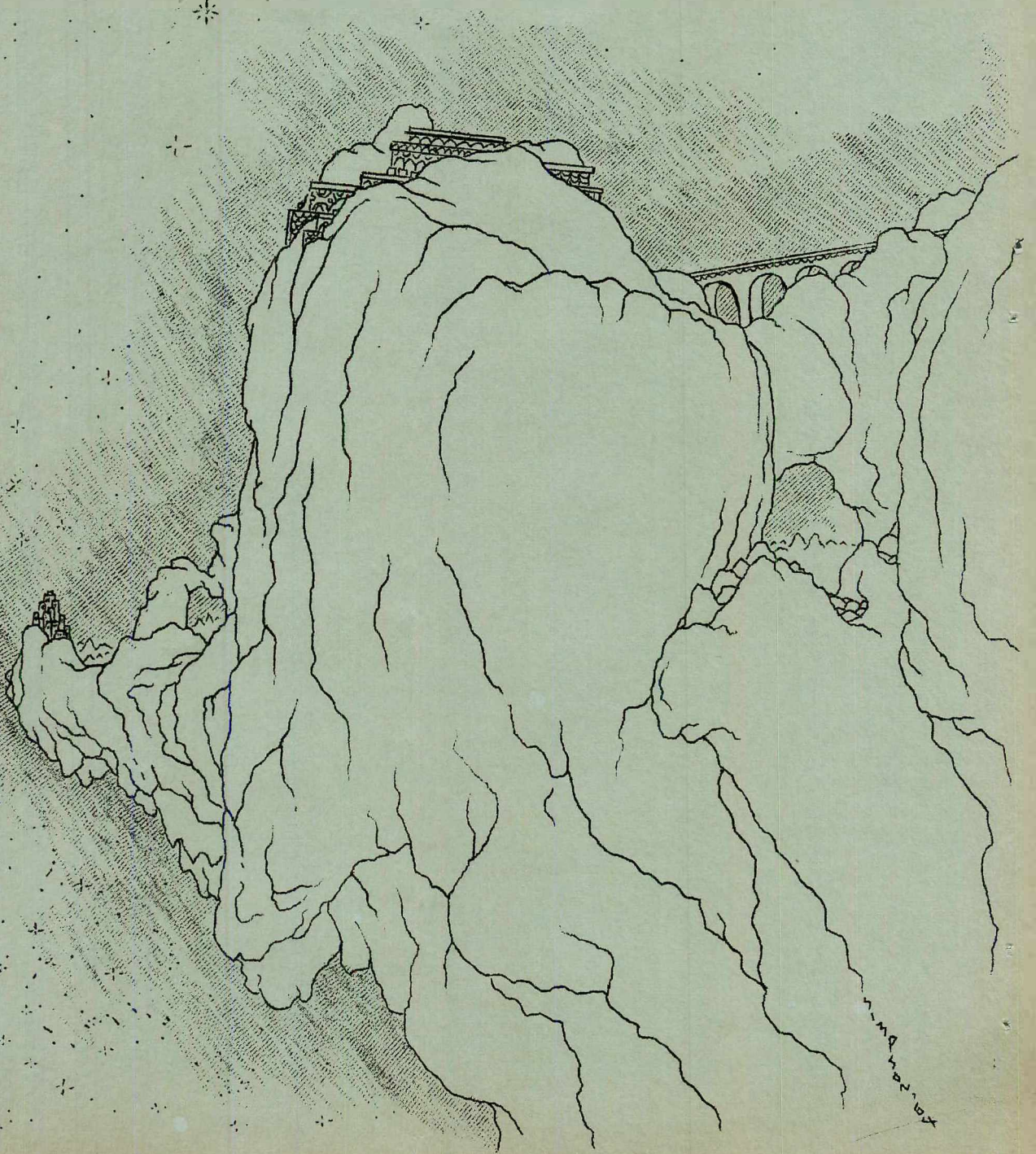
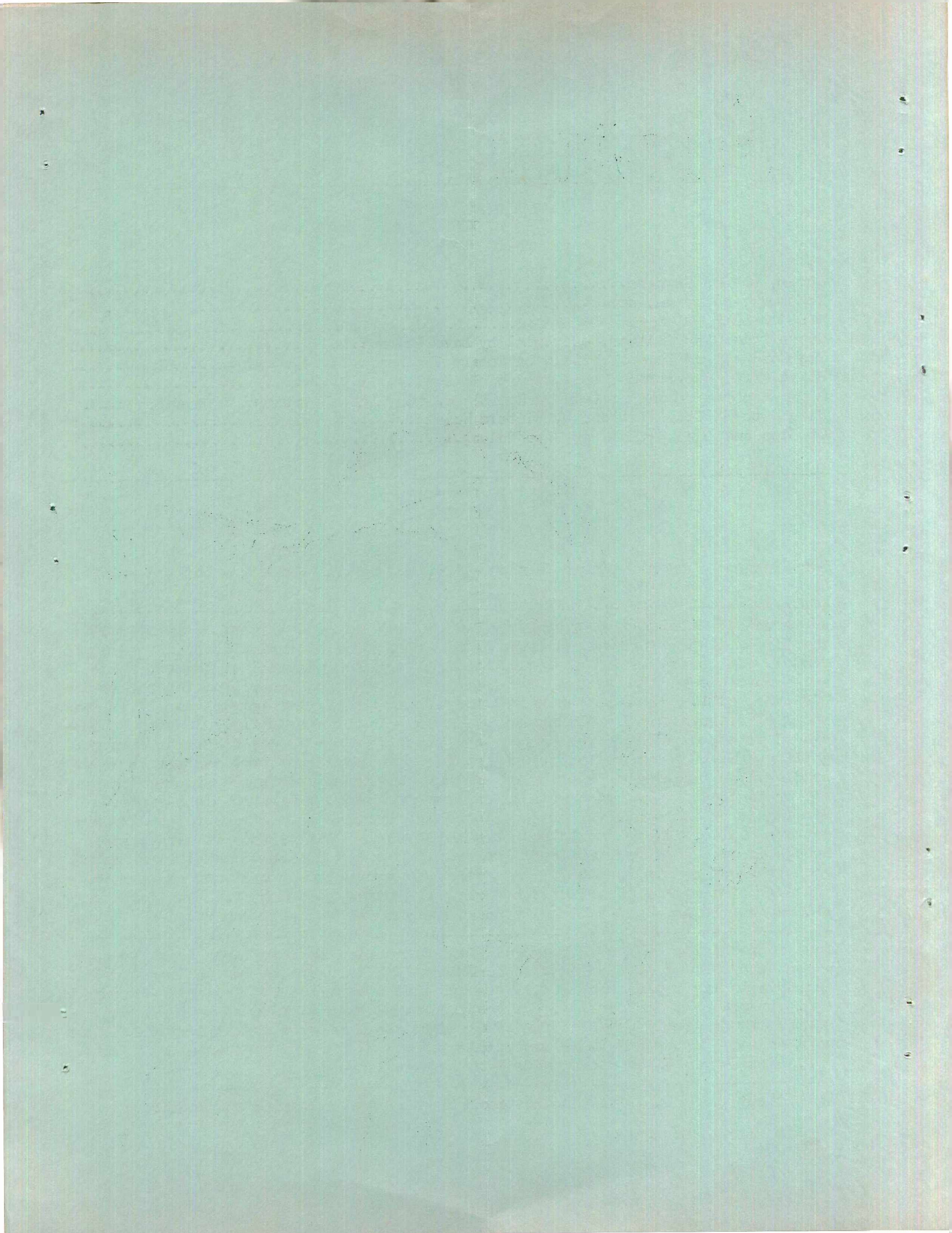


AUSLÄNDER





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* ART CREDITS *

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AUSLÄNDER is published bi-monthly by Dave Hulan, Box 422, Tarzana, Calif., 91356, and Ed Cox, 14524 Fillmore, Arleta, California, 91332, for distribution to general fandom. It is available for contributions of written material or artwork which are acceptable by the editors, for letters of comment of reasonable length, or for 20¢ each, 6/\$1. We're in the market for a reliable British agent; when/if we get one we'll figure out a sterling rate. Trades are not absolutely ruled out but are viewed with a jaundiced eye, since there are two of us; if you'd like to keep on getting AUSLÄNDER but refuse to do anything else we suggest, you can ask us about trading. We prefer the majority of our material to have something to do with stf or fantasy, or at least with literature or fandom, but we're broad-minded. We like to be Constructive, but not too bloody Serious - indexes and the like are not our meat. Fiction should be short and humorous - if serious stf isn't good enough for the prozines, it isn't good enough for us, but humorous stories can be good to break up the monotony. In artwork we prefer either cartoons or *girls*, although other types of art will be accepted if it's good enough. Next issue will appear on or about 1 February; deadline for material 10 January.

You are receiving AUSLÄNDER because: You contributed to this issue / /. You are a member of SFPA / /. You once subscribed to LOKI or were on its mailing list, and this is its replacement / /. We would like a contribution from you - article /X/, artwork / /, fiction / /. We thought you might care to comment /X/. You seemed like a likely prospect for some reason known only to the editors / /. Your name is Andy Porter and it is mentioned within / /. We had this extra copy so... / /. Unless you Do Something your last issue will be / / /.

RE: CYCLING

In the thronging mass of fans that appears instantly at a L.A.S.F.S. meeting when the Director's gavel closes the meeting, a face appeared and asked, "When is 'Auslander' going to come out?" It was cover-artist, Don Simpson. I told him that he ought to consult Dave Hulan, the co-editor. This only lasted one meeting however. The next time(s), Don said that Dave had told him to see me. Which is by way of intimating how long it has been that we've been getting out this first issue. Which may well cause somebody to ask why do such a thing anyway?

For one thing, there appears to be no major gen/sub-zine originating from the Los Angeles area now that Shaggy has given up the ghost. But more important than that, there seems to be a dearth of serious subscription, general-zine type publications in fandom these days. I seriously believe that fandom definitely is in a new Stage. Maybe this is truly Eighth Fandom, the "Apa-fandom". In what might be termed the two most far-reaching, widest range, influential fandoms, Fifth and Sixth, the evolution of fan-activity seemed to be, naturally, Neofan, then experience in writing for generalzines, possibly publishing one, then, eventually, "retirement" to an apa, there being only two or three in existence for this purpose in those times.

That was rather simplifying things, but generally, the way it worked for most fans in those times. Seventh Fandom, if it were such, more or less followed that pattern, but for a number of years there has been a transition in progress. It waxed and waned with one big burst of energy in the early sixties. But now, 1965, seems to have been the true blossoming of what I really feel is the New Era, or a new stage of fandom, the Eighth. More apas than ever before are in existence and when the dust settles, more will probably survive than ever before.

Fans in this era seem to burst forth with mimeo drums whirring, immediately joining an apa and getting on as many waiting lists as possible. You might even term this the Waiting List era of fandom... But with the advent of instant apac, the genzine field seems to have withered until few remain on the scene. I think there is enough interest to support more than there are. I believe that there is plenty of interest alive, still, in what we intend to feature in this fanzine. It isn't as easy to publish a genzine as it is an apazine. This may possibly be why there are so few. But I am sure that there are more than enough writers and would-be writers who have something to say about Science-Fiction and Fantasy in general and in particular. So here we are. Where are you? You people who read and enjoy and want to discuss Stfsy? This first issue ought to give you a fair idea of the types of material we are interested in reading and, we believe, plenty of others want to read, too.

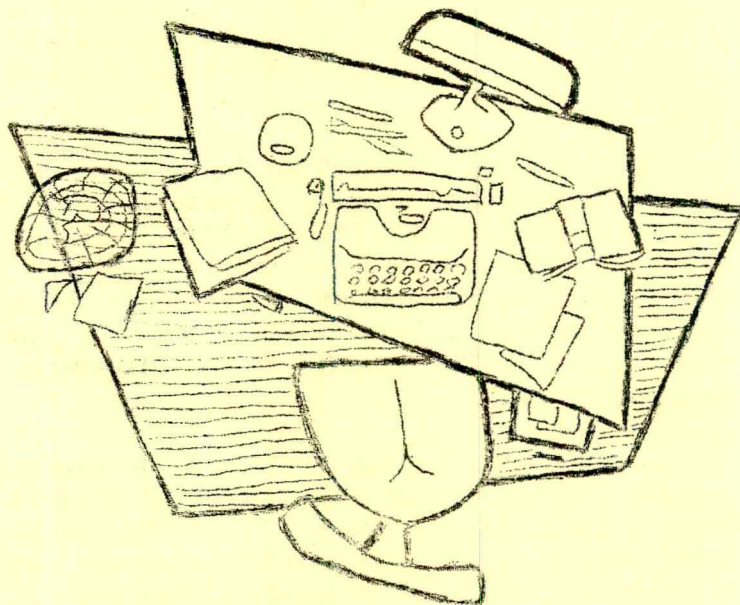
And, as you'll notice, the spectrum isn't restricted solely to Science Fiction and Fantasy. Fandom in all its facets is an endless source of material on which to found an article! Particularly, maybe, in the "Blast Off!" department starting in this issue. Is there something in the field, fan or pro, that seems to need de-bugging, or entirely gripes your rear for some valid, to you at least, reason? Let's hear about it! In any event, we do, don't-they-always!, need material by other writers. I mean, like Dave and I could probably write each issue. We might even enjoy doing so. But would you? Don't be Crowded Out! Compete! Don't let us down because we really believe that fandom is alive out there...outside the apas... Apas are fun but everybody isn't in them...yet anyway.

Best wishes for a Happy Holiday Season to you all.

---Ed Cox

DESK CLUTTER

It seems that one rainy night last February the Coxes were riding home from LASFS with us, and as is our fannish wont, Edco and I were discussing fandom. Our conversation got around to the fact that good genzines seemed to be very few, and we were going on about how this would be a good time for SHAGGY to win a Hugo or something of the sort except that Ted Johnstone was the editor and Ted is not the sort of person who edits Hugo-winning genzines.



Then I said, "I bet we could put out a good genzine, co-edited and all."

"Why not," Ed answered. "But what would we name it."

"If it's a Djinnzine you could call it FAINE," Anne contributed. We good-naturedly threw her out onto the freeway and began making plans. We decided to call it AUSLANDER because we live Way Out - farther even than the old Outlanders did - and because it's a good Teutonic-type title, which will fit in nicely with the rest of the Jotun Publications. It also makes up into several anagrams and such when you throw certain letters away.

We got some material that I had for LOKI 10, which I folded in favor of AUSLANDER, got some new stuff from Ron Ellik, a cover from Don Simpson, and began writing our own parts. It took a while. It wouldn't have taken so long, except that we didn't have any real target date, and what with my six apas and EdCo's four, plus his trip East and my move, it kept being put off in favor of other things. But from now on - bi-monthly, on the nose (more or less - give us a week for emergencies), if we can get material together. This first issue is 20 pages, since we had no lettercol; future issues are planned for 30, to include a lettercol if we get any letters. Circulation is starting at 150; those who don't respond will be dropped in favor of people who write in asking for copies. We do not want a Fantastically Large Circulation, though - 200 is about the limit. If it starts getting over that, we may have to try some Massive Rethinking...

If you could see my desk now, you'd realize that the title of this editorial is singularly appropriate - not that it's much worse than the average fan's desk, but that's pretty bad. The illo above flatters my desk no end. I might enumerate want's on it, except I don't know and don't have room - mostly papers and stuff, although there's a postal scale, three cans of Rex ink (for printing AUSLANDER), a couple of card files, a stack of half a dozen bookends, some stencilling equipment, etc. Those of you who know I have a new electric typer and are wondering why the old typeface - I tried one stencil on the electric, and the o's punch out while the M only half prints. I'll stick to ditto with it, and go to the extra effort so I'll have legible mimeography.

THE CONQUEST OF SPACE

ROBERT COULSON

To the average fan, "The Conquest of Space" refers to a book written by Willy Ley, illustrated by Chesley Bonestell, and published in 1949. But stf has filed more than one item under that title. The seven stories of Rene Lafayette's "Conquest of Space" series appeared in Startling Stories, from January 1949 thru January 1950. To the best of my knowledge the stories - "Forbidden Voyage", "The Magnificent Failure", "The Incredible Destination", "The Unwilling Hero", "Beyond the Black Nebula", "The Emperor of the Universe", and "The Last Admiral" - have never been reprinted.

A recent re-reading discloses one reason why they haven't been reprinted; they are sentimental to the point of being maudlin. Hubbard (in case any newcomers don't know, "Rene Lafayette" was a pseudonym for the then well-known author L. Ron Hubbard) was never noted for understatement; when he piles on the pathos, a sensitive literary ear may well cringe. (I was never that sensitive; I thought the series was wonderful when I first read it as a neofan, and I still enjoyed it when I re-read it for this article.) An old pulp-writer, Hubbard never bothered with plots which were any more original than necessary; several of these are rather hoary. Occasionally his writing style saves them; once in a while it fails.

"Forbidden Voyage" is the story of the backyard inventor who flies to the moon despite the hampering of the F.B.I., military security, and other bureaucratic forces marshalled to stop him. It's pretty naive today; while we brag about science fiction "predicting" flights to the moon, we tend to forget that the mechanics of the flight are immeasurably harder in reality than they were in pre-Sputnik fiction. Hubbard's cantankerous old inventor and his unsophisticated genius nephew might be a bit hard for the modern fan to swallow. One thing about the story - and the entire series - is unusual, even for today's stf; it has a downbeat ending. Despite Campbell's complaints about the prevalence of atomic doom stories, the vast majority of stf tales have always had happy endings (thereby losing most of their suspense - how can you feel much suspense in an adventure tale when you know that the hero will win in the end? In this series you were never sure, though Hubbard usually tipped the ending in advance, as he was striving for a mood rather than a gimmick.).

"The Magnificent Failure" is one of the poorer efforts in the series. Our hero, scorned by everyone in his efforts to get to the moon, has his faith restored by meeting and talking with a little orphan boy and his dog. (Well, he didn't actually talk to the dog; it might have been more interesting if he had.) Even for stf, this is pretty tall corn. He makes it, of course, finding there the message left by the hero of the first story (whose flight is completely unknown to the rest of the world) and then going on to Mars and Venus.

"The Incredible Destination" is pretty much a rehash of the first story on a larger scale. Our hero invents a new power supply that will take him to the stars, whereupon orthodox scientists refuse to believe in it, and when he actually does make the trip he fails to bring back enough proof to convince anyone. On a second trip he disappears and is forgotten for hundreds of years. (Hubbard, borrowing a leaf from Heinlein's book, is writing the series as a "history" of early space-

flight, supposedly intended as light reading for a civilization in our future. He isn't as good as Heinlein in maintaining the pose, however; every so often the omniscient author slips in.) The conclusion, when the hero's wrecked ship is discovered by accident, is typical of the series: "James Dolan had almost made it home. They gave him half a dozen lines in one edition of the World-American. There had been a murder that day." At a time when most authors were trumpeting the glory and adventure of space, this sort of ending had quite an impact.

"The Unwilling Hero" is simply Stanley's expedition to find Livingstone given a minor face-lifting and set in space. It's still a good story, but not too original.

"Beyond the Black Nebula" is undoubtedly the poorest story in the series. Broken-down old explorer - but with a Dream - is hired by criminal group for nefarious scheme. Naturally he outwits the group and achieves his Dream, though Hubbard (partly by virtue of the fact that so many of the earlier stories had been downbeat) does manage to prolong the suspense until the last moment. Unfortunately, the required last-minute explanation is pretty thin.

"The Emperor of the Universe" is another well-tryed and true adventure adapted to space - this time it's Johnny Appleseed. Surprisingly, I found it the best story in the series. The pathos is there, but it isn't overworked (well, not too much), and the conclusion is really a surprise - possibly because it's much more glorious and improbable and deserved than the ending of the real Appleseed which I was expecting. It's sheer melodrama, but I liked it.

The first six stories in the series were published in chronological order, and fit into a pattern of gradual expansion into space. "The Last Admiral" is out of order; chronologically it belongs somewhere between "The Unwilling Hero" and "Beyond the Black Nebula". Which leads me to wonder if just possibly the series was originally intended to include just six stories, and Hubbard got carried away enough to write a seventh. The plot is still ancient; elderly naval officer, fighting retirement, discovers a Menace, overcomes bureaucratic obstacles, and goes out fighting. Admiral Barmell is the first really heroic character in the series (which is another reason for suspecting that it wasn't a part of the original set). This time, Hubbard not only aped Heinlein's "Future History" series, he imitates a



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Heinlein hero. I enjoyed it tremendously at first reading, but it doesn't wear too well.

To anyone acquainted with Hubbard's subsequent career as the founder of Dianetics and Scientology, numerous lines in this series are quite interesting:

"Jonathan Bates was a rebel and a visionary and such have very short shrift at the hands of mankind." ("The Magnificent Failure")

"Even though superstition itself was more reliable than the greater part of the theories of matter and mind."

"He knew the lot of explorers who reach too far beyond the accepted fact to reach the understanding of men."

(Both from "The Incredible Destination")

Are these indications that Hubbard had already formulated theories of the mind that were "too far beyond the accepted fact"? Or was he simply embarked on an earlier version of Campbell's crusade against scientific orthodoxy? (And if so, how much did he and Campbell influence each other? John W. was the first to publicize Dianetics when Hubbard did spring it on an unsuspecting world.) Or was he simply providing conflict in the same easy manner he provided his plots and leaving irrelevant clues for fannish article-writers to stumble over? I don't know, and I doubt that anyone else does, but maybe you can have fun arguing about it.

In any event, he provided fandom with a series of stories which Johnny Wasso called "the best you have ever published", Robert A. Rivenes called "the great series of stories", John W. Jakes thought was "a good series", Ken Slater called "good", Chad Oliver liked, Marion Zimmer said was "the type of thing we need more of in modern stf", and Ed Cox considered "dry and boresome tales".

A THUMBNAIL REVIEW TO FILL SPACE

-Dave Hulan-

THE ALTERNATE MARTIANS/EMPRESS OF OUTER SPACE, by A. Bertram Chandler, both sound from their titles as if they should have been printed in PLANET in the forties. Actually, both are exercises in nostalgia, and as a confirmed nostalgic I got a boot out of both of them, although they aren't really that Great. THE ALTERNATE MARTIANS assumes that the writers like Burroughs, Brackett, and Wells who postulate life on Mars are really "remembering" across into parallel universes where such life did exist. And in this particular case, we are shown a Mars in which green Martians a la Burroughs and octopoids a la Wells are both native Martians; the former are barbarians and team up with descendants of slum-dwellers brought to Mars as slaves by the octopoids when they invaded Earth to overthrow the octopoids, with the help of the protagonists from our time-line. EMPRESS OF OUTER SPACE is one of the Rim series (or at least takes place in the universe of the Rim stories, although not on the Rim itself), and although for the most part it is straight formula, there is a lengthy dream sequence where the hero finds himself as James Bond helping Porthos, Richelieu, and Col. Lejeune to defend Ft. Zinderneuf, key to the Emerald City, from Kars Karkovitch, Red Jeddak of the Hordes of Smersh. It is the sort of thing that I personally am a sucker for, and if you are like me you'll enjoy these books (or this book, it being an Ace double) tremendously. Chandler is a good enough writer that if you like this sort of idea, you'll at least find it readable, unless you're a Stylistic Purist like Ted White, and maybe even if you are.

Shangri-L'Affaires

Third Series
1

So there we were drinking beer and running AUSLANDER on the LASFS Rex and thinking how sad it was that there was no SHAGGY any more to tell people what keen great things were emanating from the fan center of the Universe, and the idea just sort of came like why not publish a two-pager and call it SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES and sort of get back to first principles on account of this thing sort of got big and out of hand too many years ago, and it was mostly Walt Daugherty's fault 'cause he put a cover on that issue and then it wasn't the same old SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES any more, and then pretty soon Burbee got hold of it and you all know what came after THAT, so we decided to call it Third Series No. 1 on account of somebody may want to publish Second Series No. 72 sometime and anyway the club killed it dead and we don't want to go do anything the club hasn't officially approved because then the club might accuse us of Insurgency and then there would be a big split and people would start arguing about things and we don't want any feuds in LASFS on account of we are a peaceable and fun-loving type of fan who always do things Seriously and Constructively except when we are drinking beer and having parties and like this last month has been party month so why not tell you a bit about our parties and how's that for a one-sentence introduction?

Well, lessee, now, there was the Gilbert and Sullivan expedition up North last month, and maybe we might start with that on account of that's a typical LASFS thing, and I don't know any other fanclub around the country that drives 450 miles to see a show. We've been doing this sort of thing a couple of years now, ever since that first party for Patience. The Lamplighters are a Gilbert and Sullivan Repertory Company in San Francisco, who do a new play about every three months, which is just about often enough to get all the G&S party buffs all steamed up to drive 450 miles on a Saturday and go to a play and party all night and drive 450 miles home again on a Sunday. At any rate, this time there were two busloads with John and Bjo and Katwen Trimble, Alex Bratmon, Lois Lavender, Luise Petty, Fred Hollander and date Merrily Smith, Al Lewis, Fred Patten, Len Bailes, June Konigsberg who was going up to visit Ed and Jessie Clinton, John Hartman, and probably somebody else I've unjustly omitted. Felice Rolfe as usual put up the flock on her floors and spare beds, and served up a whopping spaghetti dinner for all, before adjourning to the play and the party afterwards at Emil Petaja's. Emil showed off his collection of Bok originals, and the LASFSians enjoyed a night of booze and bull with BArea fans including Sid and Alva Rogers, Poul, Karen, and two Astrids Anderson, Bill Donaho, Greg Shaw, Bob Lichtman, and many more.

The LASFS Halloween party provided a bang that will be remembered for many a year. ~~The party~~ was held at that great wooden depository of things fannish known as the Booby Hatch, where Ed Baker, Don Simpson, and Phil Castora were living. Hank Stine had just moved out and Paul Stanberry had not yet moved in, so there were only three living there then which is Important because someday Paul Turner may use all of this vital data to write an inside-viewpoint history of the LASFS, and you all know what the last one of THOSE was like! Well, it was the best Halloween Party in years, and there were some really fine costumes, and Earl and Gail Thomson --er, Thompson; Thomson's the guy who draw's those funny critter-things-- and Fred Hollander were the judges and they did a pretty good job of sneaking around through the party and taking notes about what Barbara May wasn't wearing, which was nearly everything, and then some people had some pretty interesting things on, too. Katya Hulan did a keen job of decorating, and Dale Hart and Dick Daniels were not drunk, and all sorts of other people were there and you can read all about who got the Costume Prizes in RATATOSK and Luise Petti put on a modern dance exhibition for about three straight hours that had ol' sophisticated Bill Rotsler mumbling in admiration, and we had a couple of party crashers, and THAT's what people will be talking about for a long while to come. One of these characters was big and furry (No, not Furry, he was there too) and the other was

tall and stoned and wore a Japanese-style head-band. We let them wander as long as nobody was being bothered, but then tall-and-stoned grabbed Owen Hannifen's dagger out of its sheathe, and Owen grabbed him and missed, and there was Cwen standing with a bloody hand which was the next best thing to a duelling scar, so we decided it was about time they were asked to leave. They didn't, and got quite ugly about it, until Bruce Pelz got on the phone to the police (imagine Dr. Fell summoning the police!) and they left--not willingly, but they left. So the party gradually began to break up, and the room got a bit empty, which was a bit empty, because about two AM a bullet came through the wall directly between Dian Pelz and Bill Rotsler, missing Bill by about six inches and Dian by three, and showering her face with splinters. It was followed by two more, one of them breaking a window, and cries of "Somebody's shooting!" "Hit the floor!" "It's Dick Daniels and his Goddam firecrackers!" A car zoomed down the street, Bill Rotsler was the first out of the door; Durk Pearson phoned the police who showed up in about two minutes flat, and Al Lewis went after his first aid kit for the second time that evening. Everybody comported themselves with a good deal of rationality, and gave statements to the police while Durk Pearson and Don Simpson wrestled with ideas about how to gget the sliding door loose where the bullet was lodged. The party melted away, but later that same AM, Ted Johnstone and Hank Stine located the girl who had come in with the two party crashers. She denied knowing them and stuck to her story, and since nobody could quite remember seeing her come in with them she was released, and the matter still rests in the "unsolved" file.

The Halloween Party pretty well eclipsed the Thirty-First Anniversary Meeting the preceeding Thursday night when Bob Bloch spoke on the history of the LASFS and Paul Turner called Fred Patten out of the back room to recieve the Evans-Freehafer Award for the greatest service to the club in the preceding year.

The weekend after that was the Birthday Party for EdCox which had been cleverly masterminded by his wife Anne, aided and abetted by Dave and Katya Hulan and the rest of LA fandom. Ed put his foot down and said no more parties at ChexCox, so Anne dutifully obeyed him by throwing a surprise party in his honor the following week. She invited Dave and Katya Hulan over to celebrate their anniversary and Ed's Birthday with a dinner, and then when Dave revealed that he had forgotten the beer, Ed and Dave decided it was just the occasion to make a round of the Topless Bars, which gave Al Lewis and Fred Patten time to show up with the full keg of Michelob which a whole group were giving to Ed for a present. Len Moffatt, Rick Sneary, June Konigsberg, Stu and Reiko Metchette, John and Bjo Trimble, Faul Turner, Len Bailes, and, out of the woodowrk, Cy Condra were all waiting to render a very "Happy Birthday."

Down South that same evening, Roy Lavendar Jr. was leaving the state of happy achelorhood, while parents Roy and Deedee and sister Lois looked on and Ron Ellik tucked in his bushy tail to formally make like an usher and Walt Daugherty did honors as photographer for the evening.

And the week after that which was yesterday was the big Avocado Picking and Happy Birthday Party for Len Moffatt and John Trimble which June Konigsberg threw, and also the Happy Birthday Forry Ackerman Party which Forry threw, and since everyone in LA always shows up at the three-day bash, I shan't fill up the page with nothing but names. A. E. van Vogt announced he was writing another Null-A story, and Dennis Smith arrived from San Diego to solicit memberships and speakers for next year's Westercon, and Earl Kemp was up and Earl is Up much too seldom, and there sure are a lot of fans who have Birthdays in November, aren't there?

And Hank Stine and Chris (and if Hank would ever introuduce her as anything but Chris there would be a last name in here) announced their engagement, and so how is this for an efficient job of name-dropping and fanzine-regression, eh? Pass the beer.

--RDE Conway



blast off!

In all the furore and controversy stirred up this year by one person's efforts, unashamedly and forthrightly, to secure a nomination in an area of the HUGO awards which usually goes unfilled, there has come a time to look at this whole thing from a fresh angle. Frankly, the way things were, Harlan Ellison had as good a chance to garner a HUGO as anybody.

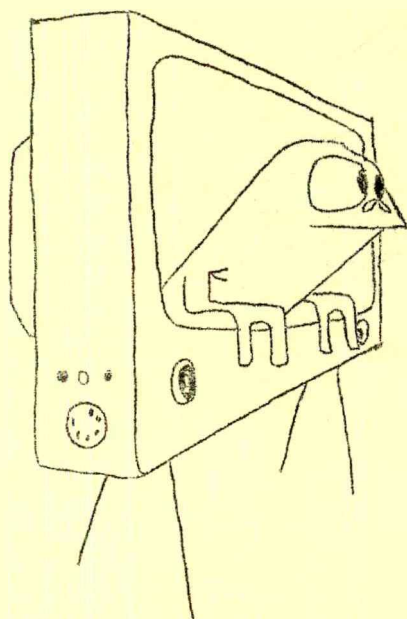
Readers of this fanzine are probably familiar with what a HUGO is and how it all started. For the 0.05% and for the hell of it as well, let's review these pertinent facts.

A HUGO is a phallic-symbol shaped award in the guise of a spaceship which is awarded to the best item of its kind in a number of categories. These usually averaged out to be "Best Novel", "Best Short Fiction", "Best Professional Artist", "Best Professional Magazine", "Best Amateur Magazine" and an oft-empty "Best Dramatic Presentation". "Special Award" usually comes in to fill the spot of the category sometimes omitted by the Committee for one reason or another. Then in these categories sometimes appears "No Award". It goes without saying, but to be on the safe side, that these are all for achievements in the field of Science Fiction.

Why award them? Some people might have gotten the definite impression that they were mainly a means to garner greater membership in the Annual World Science Fiction Convention. Others might think it a handy way for Clifton Fadiman, for example, to get his picture on the back of "Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction". Mostly it was a way for a small number of science-fiction fans to show what they thought was best in the previous year's offerings in the field.

Who sponsors the awards? The yearly World Science Fiction Convention. And here we get to the Good Part.

It is well-known throughout all actifandom that there is a Big Change in the



Atom

offing. A Committee to accept Nominations for the awards. This directly goes against the old popular vote system. "Any fan holding membership in (insert current year Worldcon title)... Each person nominating shall nominate only one item in any one category." These were filed with an application for membership in the convention or along with proof of such on the same form. From these nominations, a list was prepared. The very same people voted on items from this list. This gave quite a selection although it eliminated literally scores of personal top-favorite items.

Who did get to vote? Anybody who sent in the form. Sure. Most of these people would be readers of fanzines, since these forms were distributed as widely as possible throughout fanzine-reading fandom. The NFFF undoubtedly distributed forms. And once in a while, one would see a part-page of a prozine donating (?) its space to the same plea. Problems arising here of course is that if many readers of that prozine were to join up and vote, that zine might come out rather top-heavy. Not a

great problem. However, the same possibility existed to some degree in the distribution of the forms in the fanzines. But nobody was not automatically exempt from consideration by serving on a Nominating Committee.

The problem presented by a Nominating Committee is that the popular-vote concept is shot. The previous way gave more items a chance to get on the ballot.

But the main problem is that so far, since the HUGO Awards began, never has it really been a representative vote. Not once. Not from a mere fraction of readership voting. Here's where we knock around a few terms.

In the first place, it isn't nearly representative of the world's science-fiction reading public. The very title, "World Science Fiction Convention" is absolutely wrong. "North American" or "National" is more like it and it should be changed to that. A TAFF-winner does not a Worldcon make. Nor does it by shifting/rotating across the Atlantic periodically. So, first off, the title of the convention ought to be changed. It should be the "National Science Fiction Convention" or something to that effect. Realistic is another word we can use. Let's face it! This isn't 1939 anymore. Not even 1948. This is 1965 (for awhile yet) and there have for many years been large "fandoms" in Japan, Germany, the Scandinavian countries (a 150-page history of Swedish fandom will soon be published if it hasn't been by the time you read this!), not to mention Great Britain, Australia/New Zealand with signs of fandoms in some South American countries. We Are Not Alone. Nor are we The World Science Fiction Convention any longer...

Getting some perspective on the matter, we can now look at the matter of a sponsoring body giving out awards to United States science fiction. The 1965 awards were mainly concerned with U. S. stf. There's more of it published and a goodly amount gets over to Great Britain and a goodlier number of voters will reside in the U. S. Every time, not just this year. Okay. Either way, we have to

think of a better way to get a true and more representative vote.

First item: most people don't like to have to pay money to vote. I understand that the poll tax is slowly but surely being wiped out of existence. It might even be outlawed by a national law someday. And these people aren't even fans! But seriously, why should fans have to be a member of the convention to be able to vote for the HUGO awards? This becomes important when we consider that a hell of a lot more people ought to get to vote on something like this. Why? For it to have any meaning, for its use in advertising (although I don't recall "The Twilight Zone" mentioning it ever...), for it to retain its title without amendment. Like thusly:

"Annual Science Fiction Achievement Awards (HUGOS) as Awarded
by the Membership of the 27th World (U.S.) Science Fiction
Convention".

Unwieldy isn't it? But true!

And don't tell me that this is implied by the way its called now! Not to a non-fan. Not to the newsstand buyer of a Heinlein pocketbook with the Hugo business emblazoned on the cover or back or inside or wherever else. No.

Is it important? Why not? The way the awards are handled belies some sort of importance. Self-Importance maybe? I was about to go into a lot of detail about who should be and who shouldn't be on the Nominating Committee. Specifically, in view of the avowed business of the Value of the Hugo Award (need I cite which "Pro" said this right in print?), that no professionals be on the committee. Because then, why be half-right? Let it go all the way and the HUGO would then be in the same category, if not class, as the Oscar and the Emmy. But this, I find, is already going forward...

All right. How do we go about making the HUGOs more representative?

The yearly convention still seems to be the likely agent for handling it. I think that someday it could be handled differently. But there would remain the problem of financing it. The yearly conventions have long since passed out of the era of wondering if they'll make it out of the red and even out of the era of pretending that they may not make it. Long ago. But it isn't fair to tab the con-committee with the sole responsibility of paying the bills if they don't have complete control over the proceedings. Which has, so far, made it a pretty narrow spectrum of opinion on something reputedly the decision of the World.

Every prozine should have a ballot. It may be harder to get a donation of page-space than a cover painting. The latter was fairly easy to get in the "old days". I'm not sure about it now. This pretty well covers eligibility and voting on Bests in Professional Artist, Magazine, Short Fiction and Novel. The last item will fare quite well even in the soft-cover field what with the distribution in most areas. Hard-cover? That always will be a problem...until it appears in soft-covers and most straight stf novels will, believe me, no matter how good or how horrible.

Best Amateur Magazine has never been a problem. Fanzine fandom is pretty well covered. At least it is considering the number of genzines published in the current field. I doubt if there is more than 5% of the active fans receiving more than one or two fanzines for any length of time that doesn't get coverage. This is no real problem. Getting the information to the rank and

file science-fiction reader is the big problem. The unsovable problem is the Best Dramatic Presentation Award. Undoubtedly the top contender for that award from 1964 should have been "The World of Ray Bradbury", a stage production. But it was seen only in Southern California in 1964. It has been seen in New York and is/was slated for the boards in Toronto and London last I heard. Maybe "The Wonderful Ice Cream Suit" will be seen in all four areas if it is as successful as its forerunner, but there is little indication of that at this time. But there is no possibility for a large-scale vote for either of these productions or any other like them. There would be for a television drama. Larger yet for a motion picture. But how to get the nominations and votes in? Most of the steady readers of the prozines might conceivably watch some television stf and probably eat up "First Men in the Moon" and "The Time Travelers" (or, if it ever gets released, "Fantastic Voyage" probably in 1966). So recipients of the ballot forms could put tow and tow together. Remember. I'm referring to the rank and file non-fandom fan. A mere science-fiction reader type. The people, among others of the non-IN fans, who would be impressed by the HUGO staring at them from a magazine cover.

If we could get wide-spread representation from readers of all the prozines, the awards might take on some meaning. And let's face it, the HUGOs, so far, can't be compared to the organization and award of the Oscars by any means.

Okay. Then how much, if it were forced upon us, does a half-page ad in, say, IF, cost? A hell of a lot less than that same in ANALOG. That is one answer, but the problem is, the cost of the HUGOs may not be the only thing needing financing if this is to be truly an annual award of true meaning.

The attitude of the annual convention must change. It isn't truly, not yet, a World Science Fiction convention. The awards issued in this context aren't really what they appear to be. Don't rear off into print in an inflamed diatribe defending the honor and intent of all HUGO awarding of conventions past, present and future! I'm at no time implying that there is and/or has been a long-time, wholesale intended and achieved deciet, fraud and/or hoochah going on. Hell no. It's just that paradoxially in this day and age, the world has expanded and taken on a hellova lot more into it than it used to...the World of Tomorrow Today is upon us and has been, as far as science-fiction interest and fandom goes. It's time United States fandom took this into consideration, at least in its facet of "World Science Fiction Convention" and "Annual Science Fiction Achievement Awards".

I don't pretend to have presented upon a golden platter a plan that will be, A, immediately workable and with no bugs or unanswered problems, nor, especially, B, ideas that will be immediately, or eventually, accepted by any great, or small, segment of North American/British fandom. But I do believe that those two major problems do exist and must be taken into serious consideration in view of the boil and trouble that ensued concerning the 1964 HUGO awards.

And I do most seriously invite your comment, argument, suggestions...

---Ed Cox

I, Ed Cox, personally is not, am not, are not, venturing to support one site against another, the other, in the great race for the 1967 convention bid. I frankly don't expect to get there any more than I do for the 1966 convention. But, in view of my place of residence and fond memories of an earlier time, I think Los Angeles again is Great in 1968! Yes, sir, And South Gate Again in 2010!

PAPER PARADISE

— BOOK REVIEWS

Let's Kill Uncle, by Rohan O'Grady (ACE G-548, 50¢).

To a quiet island in Canadian waters come wealthy young master Barnaby Gaunt, young miss Christie, Uncle, and the outlaw One-Ear. The kids raise hell all over the island, Uncle plots to murder Barnaby to get the inheritance he only holds in trust, and One-Ear eats a dish-rag. It's all very easily explained, and it's with the explanation that you start reading more attentively.

Uncle isn't Barnaby's relative but by marriage, you see, and word has it that he killed the rest of the clan, murderously whittling his way closer to a fortune. Uncle likes to do things like hypnotize children so they help him murder them. Before or after they die (we aren't certain which) he Does Things to them. Barnaby's main interest in Christie, besides that they're nearly of an age and the only kids on the island, is that Barnaby thinks Uncle plans to Do Things to Christie and him and kill them. When the kids aren't painting a bull or driving One-Ear crazy, they plan to murder Uncle before he can get them.

Uncle isn't as easy to explain as the two children - but he fits well with a contemporary interest in combat- or otherwise-crazed veterans. He's an ex-Commando who got ahead by liking to strangle people; everything from his sexual to his eating habits is perverted, and he's simply off his wig about kids. Especially when he can arrange things so they help him; hypnotizing them so they slide into a deadly pit, for instance.

Oh, the dish-rag luncheon is easily explained: it was mid-January, and One-Ear was starving to death in two feet of snow when he saw something red, wet and steaming hanging on a porchrail. Only after he swallowed it whole did he find out what it was -- it's things like that, and the camp cook who shot his ear off for stealing a dish-rag, that drove the poor cougar into a fit of nerves every time he came near a human being.

Of course, Barnaby and Christie thought One-Ear was the greatest pet and confident they could have, until he learned to sleep in trees to avoid the pests. And Christie developed a crush beyond her years for the island's rigid-backed Mountie, Sergeant Coulter, who was doing his damndest to maintain discipline with two howling children running around breaking windows and nearly drowning hither and yon; things were worse than you'd think, because Coulter was the youngest person on the island till the kids arrived, because all the other young men had died in the war, and he had to bear the cross of having been a prisoner of war who lived. Barnaby worshipped the god-like Coulter, even though Coulter wanted to kill One-Ear.

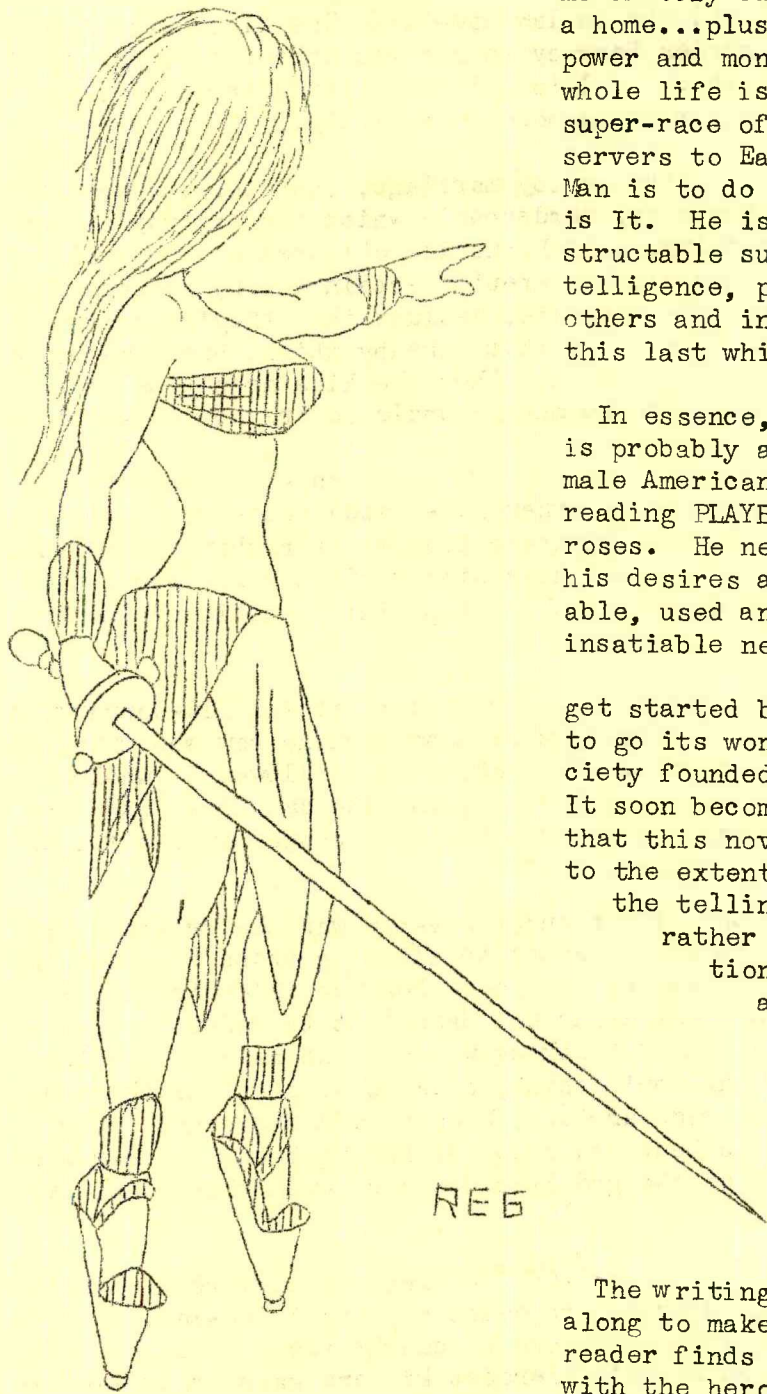
Uncle just wandered around, contriving to trap the children. The islanders, led by Coulter, wandered around trying to catch and shoot One-Ear. The kids wandered around trying to kill Uncle before he caught them. The action ends in church, and two of the western world's fiercest killers gasp their last -- and everyone left is a pawn in the hands of two scared kids.

It's a beautifully-paced off-beat story of suspense and romp, with lovely characterization of the difficult personalities of spoiled Barnaby, timid Sergeant Coulter and the much put-upon cougar, One-Ear.

---Ron Ellik

The Reassembled Man, by Herbert D. Kastle (Gold Medal L1494, 45¢).

The cover of this novel implies two things. One, that it involves women and sex, as indicated by a handful of voluptuous nudes; two, that it is "A Shattering Novel of Science-Fiction". It is the first but hardly the second.



Ed Berner is an advertising man who is moderately successful, has a family and a home...plus a great craving for women, power and money. These he gets when his whole life is upset when the Druggish, a super-race of beings, send a team of observers to Earth. The best way to study Man is to do so through one, and Ed-baby is It. He is endowed with almost indestructible super-strength, superior intelligence, power to mentally influence others and inexhaustible virility. It is this last which interests him the most.

In essence, we have a hero who has what is probably all the desirable qualities a male American dreams about having while reading PLAYBOY Magazine. But all is not roses. He needs money to help him in all his desires although women become attainable, used and discarded as he feeds his insatiable need.

Various plans and schemes get started but the dream can not be left to go its wonderful way, not in this society founded upon Puritanical principles. It soon becomes apparent to the reader that this novel is science fictional only to the extent that it sets the stage for the telling of an allegorical fantasy, rather than a straight science fiction story. It has its moments and the development of an increasingly difficult tangle from which the hero tries to extricate himself and retain all the wonders that his fantastic, new body and brain offer him.

The writing is smooth and moves right along to make an easy reading book. The reader finds it easy, also, to sympathize with the hero because, after all, it is very nice to have all those dream-world powers. But it isn't the stuff for the strict R. F. Starz science-fiction fans. It is mainly a vehicle for reminding us all once again that You Can't Have Something (Everything, in this case) For Nothing.

---the flying dutchman

The Day of the Star Cities, by John Brunner (Ace F-361, 40¢)

In my opinion, this is one of the worst Brunner novels that I have ever read. Ordinarily I am a Brunner fan; only that can explain the fact that I even finished the book - I suppose I kept hoping that it would pick up somehow and begin to resemble the other work of Brunner that I have learned to like. Perhaps it did - with about six pages or so to go. There was so little left by then that I'm not sure, but it seemed to.

I think that the basic problem with the book is that there is not a single sympathetic character in it - the characters are the biggest bunch of anti-heroes I've ever run across in one book. Waldron, the police executive who is the main character in the first sequence, is a coward who, while he dares face the fact that Earth has been invaded by aliens from the stars who seem to regard men as little more than vermin, lacks the initiative to do anything about it. When he is asked to go into "Grady's Ground", an area around the North American Star City which is off limits to government troops and therefore has been taken over by a super-businessman named Grady, on a Government mission, he goes, but he never does any planning. He simply is the pawn of others and of fate, causing effects more by his presence than by anything he does.

Greta Delarue, who accompanies him on the trip, is going less because she wants to strike a blow for Earth than because she is jealous of a Russian female Cosmonaut who seems to be catching the eye of Orlando Potter, her boss and lover. Potter, although he has a certain amount of initiative, still lacks the ability to see the way to effective action against the Star Cities, wasting his time on idle dreams.

Den Radcliffe, an entrepreneur in Grady's Ground and successor to Grady when the latter is killed by the aliens, is a thoroughly unpleasant personality who is obsessed with the idea that men are like rats to the aliens and cannot hope to do more than annoy them as rats have annoyed men; his objective is to be a first-class rat.

Ichabod, son of religious fanatics who is a slightly retarded cripple, is sympathetic in his own way, being a good kid and likeable, but he isn't hero stuff either. He likes to go into the alien city, which he has been taught to think of as the home of the angels, and when the others find this out they instantly start trying to figure out how they can get in too - adults who have gone in up to then have come out quite mad.

Along with all this there is an invasion of North America by the forces of a sort of neo-Khan who has taken over the area around the Asiatic Star City somewhat as Grady had in North America, but with different motivations. This is on the point of arriving at Grady's Ground and destroying all the "heroes" just as they are figuring out how they can use the Star Cities to travel between planets. Since this would never do, Brunner has Russia invaded by China just in time to force the invaders to turn back and defend their own lands. Deus Ex Machina, anyone?

To set off the unlovely characters, he has provided us with a plot that would do discredit to bad van Vogt - at one time he has no less than four stories running simultaneously, with very little connection. All the threads are eventually more or less gathered in, but it is little use. Everything in the first part of the book (say the first 4/5) is designed to show us how the Earth cannot possibly do anything to bother the aliens; in the last few chapters Brunner may tell us that his collection of nebbishes has solved the problem, but I don't believe him.

SALUTE TO WILLIE

by

Richard Hulan

Once upon a time there was an Urchin whose name nobody actually knew but the Social Worker called him Willie because she was raised in Opelika, Alabama. (Now it happened that Willie was a Colored boy but that has nothing to do with the story as it could have happened to any child who grew up in a Culturally Deprived Neighborhood.)

Time after time Willie told her, "My name is not Willie," but once she had asked him, "What then hight, prithe?" and he had fallen into a sullen silence. It was obviously a Defense Mechanism but he didn't tell her his name even after she had spent the entire afternoon explaining to him about Defense Mechanisms.

Willie reached the age of fourteen without ever having run Afoul of the Law. This fact gave him a certain Status in his neighborhood. In a word, he was acclaimed undisputed leader of the Gang.

Not realizing that he was Clever, the Social Worker decided to recommend Willie to the Organization for Federal Aid to Deprived Kids who have Never Run Afoul of the Law (OFADKNRAL). In due course he found himself in the Graduate School of Electronic Marvels at M.I.T.

Meanwhile, back at the slum, the Social Worker had a field day for many years. She was able to point with pride at Willie, the Kid who Stuck With It. He was the 1968 Poster Urchin for the OFADKNRAL, and even figured prominently in the 1971 UGF drive (which that year netted a record \$87 million in the Suburbs alone).

But Willie never forgot his boyhood pals, even the ones who were shot in the line of duty by an Aroused Public while attempting to steal groceries. Always he kept in mind the old Days of Hunger and Nights of Crime. Always he hoped to find a way to ease the anxiety involved in his Former Way of Life.

And finally he found it.

There was a maxim among his erstwhile Partners in Crime to the effect that "Law Enforcement Officials have a distinct odor," or, as it was usually phrased, "I can smell a cop a mile away." Operating upon this hypothesis, under a Federal grant and with the complete cooperation of the Boston Metropolitan Police Department (which furnished invaluable dirty T-shirts), Willie perfected the now-famous Little Wonder Crook's Nose. This device not only is able to smell a cop a mile away, but by means of a miniaturized computer can actually give directional range measurements which are accurate to thirty seconds of arc and 0.5% of the total range (e.g. one foot at a Cop-to-Crook range of two hundred feet).

Needless to say, the police and the Federal Government were kept unaware of this development. After all, Willie reasoned - it isn't nice to bite the hand that feeds you, but it's open season on the hand that sends you to school hungry. So, he compiled massive lists of data showing that there is no odor peculiar to the Enforcer of Justice. And the Little Wonder Crook's Nose was released to slum kids everywhere.

It wasn't long before the effects were felt. Police noticed a sharp decline in arrests. Grocers noticed a sharp decline in profits. Slum kids began to look happy, and the Federal Government viewed the entire situation with Alarm.

By Presidential order, an Emergency Crash Program was instigated, which in the record time of eighteen months produced a seven-and-one-half ton report entitled A Brief Summary of the Causes and Effects of the Unprecedented and Truly Remarkable Metamorphosis of our Culturally and Economically Deprived Areas. To this report was appended an Explanatory Appendix, With Recommendations, which is here reproduced in its entirety:

I. The metamorphosis

A. Causes

1. Little Wonder Crook's Nose
2. Pride in Vocation (Thief)
3. Better Diet (Stolen)

B. Effects

1. Rehabilitation of 9.5 million persons
2. Bankruptcy of 1.34 thousand grocers

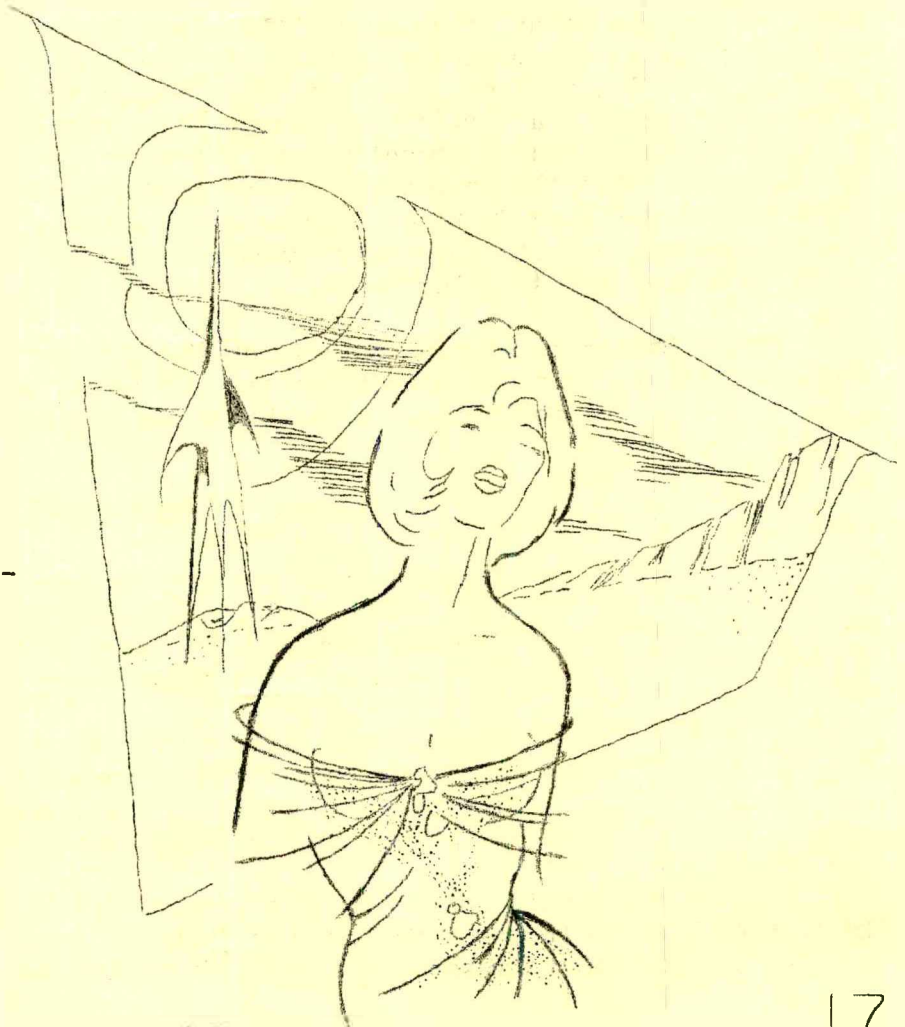
II. Recommendations

- A. That the Federal Government stock the affected grocery stores by day, in order that they might better serve their clientele by night.
- B. That the cost of this program for the first ten years be deducted from the amount budgeted for distribution of multiple copies of this report to its authors, members of Congress, and Heads of Emerging Nations; and that these copies not be printed.

These recommendations, as we all know, were carried out with the usual governmental dispatch, having been introduced and masterfully piloted through the Senate by the Honorable Willie Strom Rosenfeld, R-S.C., no kin to Willie the Kid.

As a direct result of his society-transforming invention, Willie, whose whereabouts are unknown, became the first man in history to receive (in absentia) both the Nobel Prize for Peace, and the F.B.I. rating as Public Enemy Number One. By anyone's standards, he is at the very top of his profession.

Willie, we salute you - wherever you are!



ATM

OF MICE AND MEN

The Rescuers /
Miss Bianca /
The Turret /

All by Margery Sharp, illustrated by Garth Williams, Berkley Books

The above books are a series concerning the doings of a most unusual group of mice - or at least, they are unusual from the normal human point of view. Perhaps they are only a normal branch of the Mouse Prisoners' Aid Society, and it is our own concept of mice which is so far in error, who knows? But in any case, the stories have great charm, a charm which is equally due to the writing and the excellent illustrations.

There is something of the children's book about these - in particular the profuse illustrations, which are seldom found in adult books - but they are not by any means typical children's books. I think that perhaps The Wind in the Willows is the closest well-known book to this type; there is no resemblance between them in plot or treatment, but both seem aimed at similar audiences. Children (especially older children) will certainly enjoy them, but adults who are in search of a certain type of reading will enjoy them even more, because there are references and such which are lost on a child, yet which strike home to an adult. Berkley does not seem to be promoting them as primarily children's books, and in this I feel that they are wise.

The central character of the series is Miss Bianca, a white mouse who belongs to the son of an Ambassador. She alone is enough to turn the series into something out of the ordinary, for she is far from a typical children's-book heroine. She is, in fact, what you might expect to find as a member of an Ambassador's family - a sort of Ivy League snob, highly cultured, intellectual, with all sorts of Social Consciousness but very little awareness of the real world, rather like the stereotype of the graduate of one of the prestige Eastern women's colleges like Smith or Radcliffe who dabbles in Social Work in the Slums not because she expects to really improve conditions (or even wants to) but because it's the ~~thing~~ Thing To Do.

Miss Bianca is also a poet of sorts - perhaps it isn't Great Stuff, but she's willing to turn one out at the drop of a hat, or any other reasonable excuse. Such as the following, to celebrate the escape from the Black Castle on a raft:

RAFT-SONG, BY MISS BIANCA

Day and night between faraway banks,
Smoothly glided a beautiful raft,
Sun and moon and the stars of the sky
Look in blessing on cargo and craft.

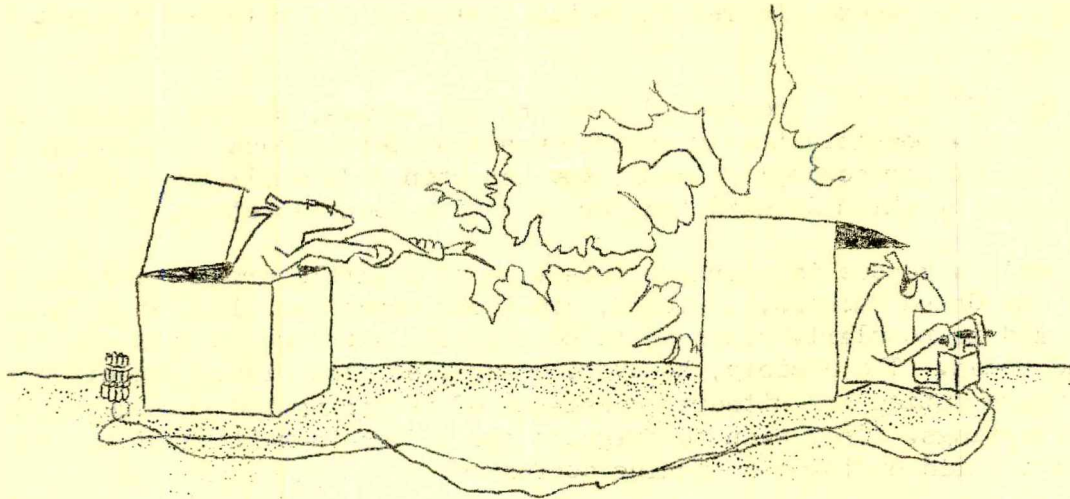
Three brave rafters with hearts of gold -
Four poor Mariners, saved from the foam -
Look down in blessing, sun, moon, and stars,
Carry them safely, swiftly home.

It is her poetic instincts that involve her in her first adventure, for it is by appealing to her as a fellow-poet that the Mouse Prisoners' Aid Society enlists her aid in the rescue of a young Norwegian poet...but that is getting

ahead of the story.

You see, mice all over the world are organized into societies whose primary purpose is to bring aid and comfort to prisoners of all sorts. Such a group existed in the country where Miss Bianca's Ambassador was stationed - a country which must, from internal evidence, be something like Graustark or Ruritania. It is patently European, semi-feudal, non-Communist, and yet sufficiently advanced that the upper class, at least, has modern conveniences. No such country exists, of course - but it should, for the sake of stories, and Miss (or Mrs?) Sharp simply assumes it does.

The group - the Mouse Prisoners' Aid Society - has learned that a young Norwegian poet has been imprisoned in the most terrible of the prisons of the country, the Black Castle. Experience has proved that it is impossible to comfort prisoners in that dread place, so they decide on the desperate venture of rescuing him. However, there is one important problem that must be overcome first - mice speak only their own language, which is universal, and the language of the country in which they live. In order to be able to rescue the poet, his cooperation will be essential, and in order to do that a Norwegian mouse, who can communicate with the poet, will be required.



With the demise of the stagecoach, travel from the Balkans to Scandinavia is a difficult feat for a mouse, and impossibly time-consuming - for any mouse, that is, except Miss Bianca, who can travel by Diplomatic Pouch in an airplane. So Bernard, a young mouse who is the other principal continuing character of the series, volunteers to visit Miss Bianca that night in her Porcelain Pagoda and attempt to persuade her to bring a Norwegian mouse to their country to help in rescuing the prisoner.

It took a good deal of persuading - Miss Bianca is a bit of a Sybarite, and doesn't greatly fancy going into some waterfront dive in Norway to recruit a Norwegian mouse for the Cause - but finally, by appealing to her poetic nature, Bernard is successful. Actually, she was only supposed to recruit a Norwegian mouse - which she did readily, Norwegian mice, like Norwegian men, being strong for adventure - but when she tried to give him directions she became so muddled that she decided she'd better accompany him. She also had a certain fondness for Bernard, and wanted to see him again.

The sea-voyage from Norway to the nearest port was relatively uneventful, and Nils (the Norwegian mouse) and Miss Bianca luckily found a toy motorboat which they used to cruise up the river to the capital of the country where the prisoner was held. There, overcome by the warmth of her welcome, Miss Bianca rashly decided to accompany Nils and Bernard (who had volunteered to guide him) to the Black Castle.

Many were their adventures, most of them concerned with Mamelouk, the fat, vicious cat of the Head Jailer. Miss Bianca, having been reared in civilized surroundings, had no fear of cats, one cat in particular being remembered as a dear friend. This sometimes caused complications for Nils and Bernard, for she simply would not exercise proper caution around Mamelouk - however, it also enabled her to rescue them once when they were caught.

To make a long story short, the prisoner was rescued, and the three heroes (or two and a heroine) returned to the Prisoners' Aid Society to be honored with a new decoration, the highest in their power to give - one named after them, the "Nils and Miss Bianca" medal. Nils then returned to Norway in the toy motorboat (which Miss Bianca gave him, since by wild coincidence it belonged to her boy), and while Miss Bianca was trying to make up her mind about what she would do next (Bernard wanted her to marry him, but she wasn't sure, since he was relatively poor), she was spotted by one of the Embassy servants who remembered her and knew she had been lost and that her boy had been worrying about her. When she heard that, she elected to return to him, although she retained a great affection for Bernard.

In MISS BIANCA, the second book of the series, she is somehow back in the same country - possibly the Ambassador was transferred back from Norway. And, in recognition of her accomplishments, she has been made Chairwoman of the Prisoners' Aid Society, of which Bernard had for some time been Secretary.

Again a rescue is planned, this time of a little orphan girl who is a servant of the Grand Duchess, a wicked, cruel old woman who lives in a palace of rock-crystal and is popularly supposed to be a witch, although in fact she is only a very bad woman. The Society, however, demurs, so Miss Bianca organizes the Ladies' Guild, whose duties had hitherto consisted of preparing the pot-luck dinner after Society meetings. They plan to frighten the ladies-in-waiting of the Duchess and rescue the child during the ensuing confusion.

Unfortunately, the ladies-in-waiting turn out to be robots (or clockwork automata, better - they don't think in any way), so they aren't frightened and the Ladies' Guild must flee. All but Miss Bianca. She stays to comfort the child, and that she does. Finally, they are taken to the Duchess's hunting lodge near Happy Valley, where the mice had been preparing a place for the little orphan girl in the household of a good farmer who had lost his own daughter not too long before.

Bernard, meanwhile, has grown worried and begins following her, armed to the teeth with a whole wheel-barrow full of cutlery. There is an exciting sequence when the bloodhounds and the Chief Ranger of the Grand Duchess are chasing the little girl and Miss Bianca through the woods as they try to make their escape, with Bernard following behind the lot. The bloodhounds trap the girl and Miss Bianca in a dovecote, but they cannot climb the ladder and so must await the arrival of the Chief Ranger. Fortunately, Bernard is right behind him, and as the Chief Ranger is climbing the ladder Bernard throws a knife which strikes him in the neck and causes him to bellow in pain. This brings the farmer's two stout sons, who unceremoniously throw him off their property and bring the little girl triumphantly to their parents, who, as Miss Bianca had planned, adopt her and live happily ever after.

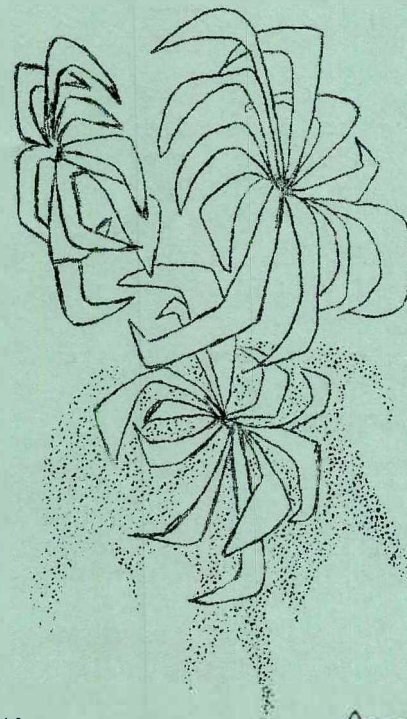
Bernard, however, is less fortunate. He once again (for the seventeenth time, we are given to understand) proposes to Miss Bianca, but despite her gratitude for his heroism, she feels that her duty to the Boy (and, one gets the impression, her devotion to luxury) requires that she return to her Porcelain Pagoda again, while poor Bernard returns to his bachelor quarters.

In *THE TURRET*, third of the series, Miss Bianca has honorably retired from her post as Madam Chairwoman, and has been succeeded by the former Games Mistress, an energetic but unimaginative mouse whom we met in *MISS BIANCA* as the one who led the retreat of the Ladies' Guild from the Diamond Palace after the discovery that the ladies-in-waiting were automata. She very busily sets to work to build up the strength of the Prisoners' Aid Society through calisthenics and the like, but does no rescuing or even comforting of prisoners for so long a period of time that the mice begin to drop out, much to the dismay of Bernard, who is still the Secretary. Loyal to the core, he cannot join in a move to oust her from her post (especially as Miss Bianca flatly refuses to resume the position and there is no other remotely qualified candidate), but he sees the Society to which he has devoted his life going down the drain because of mismanagement.

To make matters worse, Miss Bianca has learned that Mandrake, the evil major-domo of the Grand Duchess from the last book, has been imprisoned in a turret in a park on the edge of the city because he let the little girl escape, and that during his incarceration he has reformed and now desires nothing but to be the gardener for an orphanage. None of the other mice will believe this - or rather none of the adult mice - so she resorts to the Mouse Boy Scouts. These brave lads - led by one particularly charming little Cockney - take Mandrake food and vitamins to strengthen him for escape, while Miss Bianca enlists the aid of Sir Hector, greatest race-horse in the country, in a complicated scheme which, wonder of wonders, works.

Meanwhile, however, some of the mice have put it to Bernard that the only way to save the Society is for him to marry the Games Mistress and get her so occupied with raising little mice that she'll turn the society over to someone else. He doesn't want to do this, but impelled by his sense of duty he is in the way of doing it when he is saved by a twist of fate.

Actually, we have here two entirely different sets of books - *THE RESCUERS* is a not atypical children's book of the better sort, amusing in its own way, but not especially deep; however, *MISS BIANCA* and *THE TURRET* are something else again. I think that the principal factor that makes these books superior to the general run is the development of character in the principals. Miss Bianca is not a heroine type. She does heroic deeds, but all through them there is the feeling that she is not really so much being heroic as she is showing off. She is the brilliant but flighty type; a female mouse version of Flavius Josephus, perhaps. For all her brilliance, for all her good deeds, she is revealed as essentially shallow, a dill-tante in the prisoner-saving business, with no real empathy for the unfortunates but rather an eye to the glory that she can gather to herself by another spectacular



ATOM

rescue. She is, however, a born leader, possessed of that charismatic quality that is required to set any large group of people, or mice, in motion in a new direction.

Bernard, the other principal continuing character, is the precise opposite. He is no hero either, although he too is capable of heroism. But he is a solid, stolid, reliable, but uninspiring type, capable of organizing and executing almost any assignment to perfection, but without the ability to get anyone else to help him with it. The little contretemps with the Games Mistress shows this most clearly - how negative a personality must a person (or mouse, although these mice are certainly persons) have for his comrades to suggest that he marry an unattractive person for the good of the group? One may perhaps feel a bit sorry for Bernard in his hopeless love for Miss Bianca, and yet any reader must agree that it would be tragic if she were, in a weak moment, to agree to marry him. She would be miserable as a housewife, a duty for which she is completely unfit; he would be unhappy both because she was unhappy (an important consideration) and because he no longer would have his dream. Dreams are important to the Bernards of this world; by their natures their lives must be well-ordered, and without their dreams they would be sad indeed.

Garth Williams, who illustrated the books, complements them perfectly - his mice and other creatures are perfect illustrations of the sort of beings that Miss Sharp was writing about. Williams's style reminds me a bit of Thornton W. Burgess, although there is a fineness of detail much greater than anything Burgess ever did that I can remember. If I had the patience I could reproduce one of them in this fanzine, because they are the sort of line drawing that mimeo could reproduce well; however, there might be copy-right problems, too, and I'm lazy, so I won't.

Anyhow, they are only 50¢ each at your local newsstand if you can find them, or I suppose they could be ordered from Berkley Books if you can't - they were only issued about a year ago. Or you could look in your local library. But if you like this sort of thing, they are excellent.

Say there, stfans - since the table of contents was typed we at AUSLÄNDER have come up with a Special Treat for you. In addition to our Serious constructive material, we have persuaded one of the LArea's leading faans to write us a column dealing with Los Angeles fan doings. For this all-new, innovative type column, we have chosen what seems to us a fine, innovative type title. We hope you will all enjoy and respond to - SHANGRI L'AFFAIRES.



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