

Last Sunday I was supposed to fly to Tasmania for the firm. The disastrous fires of February 7 put an end to that trip for the time being. We are all very concerned about Don Tuck and our other friends in Hobart, Mike O'Brien and Eric Rayner. I have written to Don and hope to have news from him in time for ASFR8.

Talking of business trips, here is my schedule for the next few months: February 20-23: Bendigo/Shepparton/Benalla/Albury (I hope to see Alan France at Wodonga on the 22nd). March 6-9: Warrnambool/Hamilton/Naracoorte/Mt. Gambier/Portland. April 2-15: Perth, W.A. May 14-27: Tasmania (Hobart, 14-19; Launceston, 20-23).

Trying to fit these trips in with my publication schedule is the devil of a job. The publication schedule is as follows:

ASFR8 Deadline for contributions: February 27
 Running-off and collating: March 4
 Mailing: March 5

ASFR9 Deadline for contributions: March 18
 Running-off and collating: March 25
 Mailing: March 29

ASFR10 Deadline for contributions: April 29
 Running-off and collating: May 6
 Mailing: May 7

On February 3 and 4, we ran off a special 20-page issue of ASFR (no. 7½) for free distribution at the Easter Convention at Bristol in England. On the Saturday morning, partly under false pretences, Tony Thomas, Lee Edmonds, and Paul Stevens came in to the Club and helped us to collate 150 copies of this issue. We finished in less than an hour - stapling and all. Which only proves that too many cooks make light work. If you have an hour or so to spare on March 4, March 25, or May 6, we'd be pleased to have your assistance. (Volunteers for envelope-addressing are welcome, too!)

ASFR7½ was the first step in our Invade-England-Scheme. The second step was the appointment during this month of a British agent for the magazine - and the lucky man is GRAHAM HALL (57 Church Street, Tewkesbury, Glos., England). Graham, already British agent for two of the best fanzines going - RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY and NIEKAS - sounds very enthusiastic about ASFR, and we feel he will do an excellent job for us. We're proud to have him on board.

ASFR7½ contains only two pages that you will not see: my editorial. (You're not missing anything.) It includes John Foyster's art-

icle, A NOTE ON J.G. BALLARD: SOME RECENT SHORT STORIES, which is to appear in ASFR8, the letters by Walt Willis and Bill Temple from ASFR7, Don Symons's poem, SICILY, AFTER, from ASFR3, and brief excerpts from letters published in earlier issues. Most important, it contains a subscription form: the object of the exercise.

ASFR8

When I had finished stencilling ASFR7, I was left with no material at all. Five weeks later I have more than enough for no.8. If we keep on at this rate, we will have no difficulty in keeping to a monthly schedule - and that is the aim for 1967. (Finance is another matter; we're working on it.)

The lead article is, as I mentioned, John Foyster's - and at this moment its eleven pages are lying, ready for collation, in the cupboard at the Club. A brief article by Bertram Chandler follows. The lead review is of Vidal's MESSIAH, by Stephen Cook. At least ten more books are reviewed by Robert Gerrand (his first article for us), Harding, Reynard, Foyster, Diana Martin, Widdershins, and myself. There is a BURST from Smith. And letters from James Blish, Buck Coulson, Felice Rolfe, Rick Sneary (USA), John Knight (NZ), Pat Terry, Norma Williams, Bertram Chandler, and Jack Wodhams (Aust): how many of these can be fitted in remains to be seen. There will also be a news column by Alan Reynard. Since I haven't finished stencilling yet, there may be further inclusions or exclusions. There usually are.

ASFR9

This is supposed to be the long-awaited Cordwainer Smith issue, but don't bank on it. Most of the work has been done on it, but we are waiting on a vital article promised by Mr. Arthur Burns. In the event of that article not being available by March 18, this special issue will be postponed until August: and no.9 will contain either Part 2 of John's NOTE ON BALLARD (if ready), an article by Bill Temple on John Wyndham (if permission is granted to reprint), or (failing all else) VISITORS FROM OUTER SPACE by Vyacheslav Zaitsev. Reviews are therefore required in time for this issue, just in case.

ASFR10

Scheduled to contain Part 2 of John's NOTE, but this naturally depends on what happens to no.9. Other possibilities are Part 3 of the NOTE and the articles mentioned last paragraph.

ASFR11

Our First Anniversary issue, for June. For this one we hope to leave the accustomed path and publish some honest-to-goodness Australian fiction. Need I say, very short fiction? Foyster has promised to revise his SISTER SALVATION. Lee and Stephen Cook have mentioned the possibility of contributing something. Poems would be welcome, but in

ten months I've only found one worth publishing, so I'm not hopeful. The standard required for fiction (and poetry) in ASFR is high. We do not intend to publish what is known as 'fan fiction.' I will have no hesitation in scrapping the whole idea of a fiction-issue if nothing submitted comes up to professional standards. (That doesn't only apply to fiction, of course. I'll skip issues rather than publish stop-gaps.)

ASFR12

Scheduled to contain Part 3 of John's NOTE ON BALLARD if all goes well with no.9.

OTHER ARTICLES

Bob Smith, I hope, will continue his delightful SMITH'S BURST series. Jim Ellis is working on a series tentatively called THE ASTRONAUT AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE, which may or may not work out. If it does, Bob, and if we're stuck for space, we may have to alternate your series and Jim's.

John Foyster is, among so many other things, working on an article - which may develop into a series - that will out-Moskowitz Sam. More about that later.

I would like some suggestions (or a capable volunteer) for an article on SCIENCE FICTION FOR CHILDREN. Lists of books you think should be considered, or names of persons we might approach for such an article.

On January 19 we held an editorial conference at my place. Among the projects we discussed was an idea for a series devoted to 'the basic sf library.' It's been done before. There are many difficulties involved. I will not consider launching such a series until (a) we know exactly what we are trying to do, (b) I am absolutely assured of the successful monthly continuation of the series. So, please, I want all your opinions on this subject - and indications of your willingness or otherwise to participate.

First, let me outline the ideas we came up with at that meeting. We feel that the idea of the series is a good one. If we refrained from doing things because 'they've been done before' we wouldn't have a magazine at all. We aim ASFR, primarily, at Australian readers. How many of them have seriously thought about which books are the classics of sf, or why they are so? We thought, at first, that each article in the series should be devoted to one book. Now, we are not so sure. EARTH ABIDES is an obvious choice, and so, if you extend the idea to a series of connected novels, is the FOUNDATION series; but what do we do about Van Vogt? The books we selected for a start (and the persons who signified their willingness to tackle them) are: The FOUNDATION series & MAGISTER LUDI (John Foyster), EARTH ABIDES

(Bob Smith), THE PARADOX MEN & SINISTER BARRIER (Stephen Cook), the LENSMAN series (Lee Harding), TO LIVE FOREVER & THE SIRENS OF TITAN (Robert Gerrand), THE SPACE MERCHANTS (Paul Stevens), and LAST AND FIRST MEN (John Bangsund). Other books suggested were THE WEAPON SHOPS & THE WEAPON MAKER, SLAN, THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE, TIME AND AGAIN, THE SEEDLING STARS, INSIDE OUTSIDE, THE CITY AND THE STARS, MORE THAN HUMAN, ROGUE MOON, I, ROBOT, the CITIES IN FLIGHT series, and A CASE OF CONSCIENCE. Oh, and THE STARS MY DESTINATION.

Each book would have to be most carefully thought about: no hit-or-miss tactics here; and since the object of the series is to establish books as classics, each book would have to be reviewed by someone who really liked it.

An alternative to this series which has been suggested is one in which the great themes of sf are considered. I think this would be much more difficult, but - I would like your suggestions.

BOOK REVIEWS

This year John Foyster will be extremely busy with his university work and Lee Harding will be devoting far more time to the writing of fiction than he has of late. Over the last few issues we have seen Stephen Cook and Diana Martin contributing effectively to the review section. In the next issue is Rob Gerrand's first review. Paul Stevens and Lee Edmonds are working hard on reviews, undismayed by our rejections; they are showing exemplary enthusiasm and application and I'm sure they'll make the grade soon. Tony Thomas has expressed interest in reviewing. All of this is excellent, but we still need more reviewers. I'd rather see twelve reviewers tackling twelve books thoroughly than a few people struggling to do three or four each.

Review copies are beginning to come in steadily. Dobson, Whiting and Wheaton, Michael Joseph, and Penguin publications are now supplied regularly. We've been promised Four Square books. Our policy with review copies is simple: the reviewer has the choice of retaining the book or selling it to the Melbourne SF Club library - proceeds of such sales going to ASFR funds. In the following list of books I would like to have reviewed, 'RC' indicates that a review copy is likely to be supplied, and 'JB' indicates that I could probably borrow a copy for review purposes. To save duplication of effort, I would prefer you to advise me before starting work on your review.

NEW WRITINGS IN SF 9 (RC) Sprague de Camp: AN ELEPHANT FOR ARISTOTLE (RC) Sprague de Camp: The KRISHNA series (JB) Beste: MOONBEAMS Brackett: THE SWORD OF RHIANNON (JB) Chandler: CONTRABAND FROM OUTER SPACE (JB) Clarke: TALES FROM THE WHITE HART (JB) Dick: THE UN-TELEPORTED MAN (JB) Farmer: THE GATES OF CREATION (JB) Gaskell: ATLAN/THE SERPENT/THE CITY (JB) Jones: PLANET OF THE DOUBLE SUN (JB) YEAR'S BEST SF 10 (JB) Moorcock: SUNDERED WORLDS (JB) Petaja:

THE STAR MILL (JB) Reynolds: THE EARTH WAR (JB) Sheckley: SHARDS
OF SPACE (JB) Silverberg: NEEDLE IN A TIMESTACK (JB) Swann: DAY
OF THE MINOTAUR (JB) Asimov: NINE TOMORROWS (JB) Clarke: TIME
PROBE Friedberg: REVOLVING BOY Gatehouse-Hardy: CHAMELEON (RC)
Gordon: UTOPIA MINUS X NEBULA AWARD STORIES Rackham: TIME TO LIVE
Randall: DAWNING LIGHT Reynolds: SPACE PIONEERS (RC) Simak: WHY
CALL THEM BACK FROM HEAVEN? Vance: STAR KING (RC) Anderson:
PLANET OF NO RETURN (RC) Ball: SUNDOG (JB) Barren & Abel: TRIVANA
ONE (RC) Biggle: FURY OUT OF TIME (JB) Blish: MISSION TO THE
HEART STARS Blish: TRIUMPH OF TIME Boardman: SF HORIZONS (RC)
Boulle: TIME OUT OF MIND E.P. Bradbury: MARS series Ray Bradbury:
TOMORROW MIDNIGHT Finney: CIRCUS OF DR. LAO (JB) Harker: THE
SYMMETRIANS (JB) Harrison: A SENSE OF OBLIGATION (RC) Harrison:
THE STAINLESS STEEL RAT (RC) Judd: OUTPOST MARS (RC) Knight:
THE DARK SIDE (RC) Lawrence: THE TOMORROW OF YESTERDAY (RC)
O'Donnell: THE SCREAMING SKULL (RC) Sellings: THE QUY EFFECT (RC)

QUERY: Who is John Brosnan? Anyone knowing his whereabouts please
contact. (Mentioned in YANDRO 165 as Australian publisher of BABBLE ON.)

CORRESPONDENT WANTED: by Mauricio Kitaigorodzki, Aguirre 688-3⁰B,
Buenos Aires, Argentina. (One for you, Pat? I've sent him ASFR.)

WANTED TO BUY OR BORROW: Olaf Stapledon: STARMAKER and LAST MEN IN
LONDON; A.E. Van Vogt: SLAN. (John Bangsund)

* * *

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