

IRUSABEN Number Eleven, Majuju 1953, published quarterly by Bob Silverberg, 760 Montgomery St., Brooklyn 13, New York, for the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, Mailing #63. Several copies are available to outsiders at 5¢ each. This here represents the 16th Silverberg Fapazine.

REPORT FROM THE FORGOTTEN PAST

At the beginning of 1950, FAPA was in a sad state. A proposal to raise the dues had failed, despite overwhelming approval, simply because only a third of the membership bothered to vote. A 200-page mailing was a rare thing; one mailing contained a robust 116 pages. Redd Boggs, then president of FAPA, exhorted the members to get with it, and pleaded for an envelope-busting mailing.

Redd only had to wait three years. The 62nd mailing showed up at 760 Montgomery with its envelope well fractured, and with SKY HOOK visible at one side and FANTASY AMATEUR at the other, making it a clean sweep for Boggs. Just to put it mildly, the quantity (and quality) of the mailing was an awesome thing. To date, no postmailings have shown up, but I still have hopes that someone will postpost the 21 pages necessary for what I think will be FAPA's first 500-page mailing.

FANTASY AMATEUR - Just for the record, a Fapoll Card showed up here on January 21, bearing the initials of a well-known Illinois huckster, with this comment: "Ain't this a heck of a time to discover and mail this? B.T." # Word has reached me that a new FAPAN intends to form a political party and use it to back his candidacy for FAPA presidency. This is just to make public that I intend running for the selfsame office. Strife?

LARK - Noted with interest.

DIVISIONAL RESERVE - It's unlikely that the Russian equivalents for Fantasy, Fan, and Federation will all begin with the same letter, so HOOO is probably a transliteration.

THE BEM AND I - Noted.

HORIZONS - The November mailing of HORIZONS included the comment, "I'm so far out of touch with prodom that I hadn't known Doc Lowndes was editing again." Apparently you found out in a hurry when you saw the signatures on those checks, Harry. # Boggs warned me that this issue would contain some "pillar-tottering" news, but I hardly expected the announcement that you'd attend the Philcon. Downright amazing! # I trust that you, as an admirer of Penguin New Writing, have seen the flock of imitators which American pb companies are issuing. The first was Signet-Mentor's New World Writing, frankly patterned after the Penguin item (and even including material by John Lehmann.) There've been two issues so far, both bulky and generally good stuff, and a third is due this spring. One thing made me smirk, though: the inclusion in the second issue of work by such struggling young authors as James Jones, Norman Mailer, Shirley Jackson, Calder Willingham, W.H. Auden, and Pablo Picasso. NWW is recommended. There are also two others: Pocket Books' Discovery, a less ambitious (and less expensive) project along similar lines, and Doubleday-PermaBooks' New Voices, which is chiefly reprinted avant-garde fiction. There's also Perma's 7 Arts, an anthology of material which can only be described as highbrow. And coming in June, from

Avon, of all people, is an anthology of material from Partisan Review. Wonder if they can find an erotic cover? # Price on all of these is 50¢ per, except for Discovery at 35¢. Even paperbacks are expensive items these days. Did anyone notice that the Bantam 35¢ edition of Brave New World has just 30 pages more than the Bantam 25¢ edition of Space on My Hands issued the same week?

HALLUCINATIONS - West Cupcake seems to be well on its way to fannish immortality, so let me remark for posterity that the name is a Boggsian corruption of West Copake, the pleasant New York State hamlet where I do my summer gaffiating each year. # Your typer has more strange gadgets on it than any I've seen...a pi sign, and also an indescribable paragraph-separater.

YDMOS - A bit pointless, even though I just acquired all but one of my missing Air Wonders. I don't know why anyone would require a listing of the stories in that particularly dull magazine, but I admire your persistence in doing all these things. Since I file my FAPazines by mailings, the only way this can be much use to me is my memorizing it all. I doubt it. # Authentic seems to be becoming international; two recent issues used novelets from Other Worlds, and now a Bryan Berry from Authentic does a reverse and bobs up in TCS-AB. # I don't see what you mean by "I notice that there will be a Texas STF conference... I hope I attend." I guess you mean "I hope I am able to attend". # Compare your remarks on "The Blind Spot"... "one of the truly magnificent tales of fantasy...magnificent plot...beautiful writing" with Damon Knight's elegant and awesome dissection of the same yarn in a del Rey mag recently. I found it unreadably purple.

FUNCTIONS OF X - This may be blasphemy, but I consider this by far the best of the Gafia Poetry Leaflets. The unsigned poem in Venable's mag last mailing (since reprinted in Slant) was a high spot of the year in FAPA; I'd like to see more Venable poetry.

TIME OUT OF MIND - Oh, come now.

VIEWPOINTS - Attractive. Matter of fact, not only have I been lured by a mimeograph handle, I've been lured by a George Frederic Handel. Lured to the First Presbyterian Church, as a matter of fact, just to hear "Messiah" on Easter Sunday. # I get loaded under too many ethics in school...Spinoza this week, Aristotle last...to have the heart to battle through Gerald Pearce's article. After all, FAPA is a hobby, and I get enough of college at college. It looks worth reading, too, and I'll probably go through it after the end of the semester.

IRUSABEN - Just realized that if I had bothered to check Slater's quiz I would have found myself spelling the bboy's name "Walter A. Wiltis." # And I mentioned that Royale's version of Tchaikowsky's Fourth was unfinished, when actually it's the "Pathetique" which got trimmed to fit the record.

STFSTUFF - No, STFTUFF. This will rank with SNULNBUG. Noted, & FLOP.

LOOKING BACKWARD - By now you know what happened to Silverberg that mailing. I had a streak of not missing a mailing which extended over several years, and I decided to break it before I let it get so long that it became a FAPA tradition; if Warner were to

miss a mailing, we'd think Hagerstown had been blotted out by some nameless calamity.

TEILCHEN - I'd love to see Harlan Ellison trying to punch Ken Beale in the nose. He'd have to get on a chair to reach the big boy's proboscis. # Talk about Hal Shapiro's bourbon bottle reminds me of Jose Ferrer in "Moulin Rouge," sipping cognac from a concealed hollow in his cane.

UNASKED OPINION - FAPAZines are credited both to publisher and author, if the latter is a FAPAN. Thus Lee Hoffman could publish an eight-page Vernon McCain article and both get eight pages credit. SAPS adopted some sly rule to circumvent this. # Maybe SAPS rates as a "better organization" than FAPA because its members produce 6 pages per mailing while FAPAs only offer 2 per, but I find this dubious concluding indeed. Doesn't relative quality have anything to do with your comparison? SAPS is not a flea on FAPA. # Here's a fervent echo of Dick Eney's request that you burn that so-cute Kurre Kalendar. # Why do you care about Mari Wolf's column if you've openly admitted that you don't subscribe to fanzines because you don't think they're worth spending money on?

MASQUE - This, I think, is the issue heralded for late 1950. MASQUE is as big and as grand as ever. This is one of FAPA's highlights Odd, isn't it, that one mailing should have three jumbo mags totalling 155 pages between them? Reminds me of that magnificent burst-of-glory SPACEWARP which ran more than 80 pages. # Too bad the dittoing wasn't of the same caliber as the material.

LIGHT - BLOOMER GIRL is well forgotten today, and it's not a decade old. I can't see it standing up for two centuries. Opera "fans" are illogical, anyway; imagine the way they gush over most of Puccini's sentimental hokum while they let his masterpiece, TURANDOT, fall into neglect! I dare say there are a hundred people familiar with Boheme for each person who's heard of TURANDOT. # LIGHT looks just the same without the backing sheets.

D'JOURNAL D'ART -- By all means lets have lots of Bergeron pics. # I can't say I've ever heard "frogs, croaking."

PROMETHEUS - Beautiful dittoing. Boggs cogent as usual; I have a hunch the early half-size SPACESHIPs were in the back of that canny mind when he discussed pseudo-Campbells. I recall proudly slapping the immortal line, "All Stories Complete in this Issue," on Sship #2 or #3. # Talk about innovations, I ran an ad for myself in the current SPACESHIP and innovated a bit when I forgot to put my name on the ad. This has Max's gambit of putting the front cover in back beat allhollow. # A fine mag in a fine mailing.

BURBLINGS - Gad, this mailing is astonishing! Even Burbee arises from somewhere to publish again. This is like a voice from the tomb.

THE ROAD TO FAME - Thanks, Doc, for this fine project. Pity it couldn't have been mimeod on both sides of the page, which would have saved a load of paper.

SKY HOOK - I've been trained to believe that 'perfect' is a word not susceptible to modification, so it goes against the grain for me to say that this issue is more perfect than the others...yet it is all I can say. # Seems to me your style book has led you astray. I object to your terminology, "Science Fiction book club." The latter two words are part of the proper name of the company, methinks, and I think they should rate capitals. # Who in blazes is this man Atheling? Surely a man of his intelligence (and familiarity with the field) could not have endured silence all these years before bursting into print. # Sky Hook is so good I weep.

DREAM QUEST - Why did all these folks from the pre-boom era of fanning choose this mailing to come out of the voodvork? # The promag reviews were thoughtful, but I'm shocked to see that you actually read all of Madge and OW, while neglecting such unpretentiously good mags as the Lowndes trio. # Talk about Howard Browne's reprint policy. Ken Beale noted that Browne was presumptuous enough to edit E.M. Forster's "Celestial Omnibus," which is a daring move for a man whose literary tastes are such that he regards Spillane as a great s-f author. And I compared the Amazing reprint of "Here There be Tygers" with the original version and found that Browne or someone had completely re-written the Bradbury story.

STEFANTASY - Priceless indeed. WHAT does Tewler mean? # It's a sign of a fantastic mailing when there are three or four mags better than STEF in a single mailing!

GOOFIA etc. - Rapp always was one of my pet poetasters. SPACEWARE (by proxy) is neater than Warp ever was on the HIAISM mimeo.

REVOLTIN' DEVELOPMENT - Noted.

FEB 43-Feb 53 - Why do four mags in a row use the same color green paper? # This was good FAPA-type stuff. # I don't regard modern American music as anything more special than modern French music, or even the modern Indian stuff that WQXR broadcast last month. I see no more reason for "supporting" American composers than I would for an "America for the Americans" campaign. # I suspected Leeh was responsible for the parenthetical comments in this before I read the postscript. # Merwin and Loomis and I must be the only people alive who liked Orig Prem.

FOUR-SQUARE - More green paper. # I think Winsor's "Lovers" has been discussed in fanmags almost as much as Farmer's story of the same name. I suspect the reason is the same for both stories. # Whoever got Tucker back into FAPA did us a service.

GRIFAPAC - Cover attractive. I've never done any color mimeo work myself, so I admire you folk who bother changing ink pads and all that. # Your typo 'Astraununt' brings to mind the issue of HJ Campbell's prozine which bore the proud designation, AUTHENENTIC SCIENCE FICTION. This stuttering must be contagious. # If you'd forget about justified margins and devote that extra time to typing more slowly, you'd have a better-looking mag. I should talk.

Enough comments. No mags left, anyway.

Ask The Man For Ballantine

We seem to undergo a revolution in every field fairly often these frantic days. From 3-D to color television, no medium is content with old-fashioned stillstanding. The publishing field is undergoing some sort of one-man revolution, too.

Ian Ballantine was a prime mover in introducing 25¢ books to this country just before the war, after seeing the spectacular success Penguin Books was making in England in the late thirties. He was also responsible for the founding of Bantam Books. Now, for the third time, he's at the head of a paperback firm, and this one is causing quite a stir.

He announced Ballantine Books in early 1952: a scheme was afoot whereby he would publish simultaneously hard and soft cover editions of books--originals--at \$1.50 and 35¢, aiming for both markets with editions identical save for binding. He also invited all publishers to copublish with him, allowing him to distribute a paperback edition simultaneously with the trade edition. Houghton, Mifflin; and Farrar, Straus, Young, were the first two publishers to join in such an agreement. In an elaborate royalty schedule printed in The Saturday Review last spring, Ballantine demonstrated that his scheme was more profitable to the author than the customary policy of letting the reprint appear only when the hardcover was through selling.

The first Ballantine Books appeared this fall. They are large, sturdy, attractive paperbacks, with wraparound covers by capable artists; well printed and bound, they jumped up to the top ranks in appearance. The hardcovers, conversely, look considerably smaller than regular trade books, because they are printed from the same plates as the paperbacks. Three of the first sixteen books were hardcovered by Houghton, and one by Farrar. The others were published in both formats by Ballantine. All but one \$3 Houghton book are priced at \$1.50, which is a significant revolution in itself these days.

The breakdown on the first sixteen Ballantine Books shows that they include five westerns, one book of comic strips, one collection of science fiction short stories, one non-fiction documentary item, and eight unspecialized novels, including one which made the best-seller lists. A noteworthy omission is that of any detective fiction at all.

I've bought four of these first sixteen, and, though I probably won't buy the westerns or the documentary, will probably get a look at the rest some day. I've only read one of the four (after all, I've only had them a couple of months, and there's stuff here which has gone unread since 1950) and I enjoyed it considerably. It was Heyday, by W.M. Spackman, a first novel in the Scott Fitzgerald tradition, but concerning the lost generation of the early thirties rather than of the decade previous. Despite a tendency to overwrite, Spackman has a remarkable style, and I, for one, would like to see someone like him in s-f, where the biggest criticism is that all the stories seem to have been written by the same person. Heyday is a highly effective work, and makes one wonder what the hell Mr. Spackman has been doing for the past forty years when he

could have been writing novels like this one.

Another Ballantine Book I bought is The World of Li'l Abner, by Al Capp. Despite the note on the flyleaf that this is an original publication--not a reprint--the following page mentions a number of United Feature Syndicate copyright dates which indicate that the book, like the Pogo items, is a compilation of Capp's newspaper strips. On flipping through the book, I discovered that Li'l Abner is nowhere near as good as it was when I last read it--back in the Shmoo days--and I doubt if I'll read this book for a long time. Capp has some intelligent things to say, but is nowhere near as unselfconscious as Walt Kelly. I trust it won't be considered sycophancy on my part when I admit that I've been very fond of Pogo since his introduction to New Yorkers in the--alas--defunct paper PM.

And still another Ballantine I've bought is Ruth Park's novel The Witch's Thorn, which deals with Maori-white relations in New Zealand. This has been very highly recommended by people whose opinions I value, and I intend to read it shortly. This, again, is not strictly an "original," since it first appeared in Britain.

The most exciting of the Ballantine Books from our point of view is the sixteenth, Star Science Fiction Stories. Edited by Fred Pohl, it includes fifteen original s-f short stories by just about every big name in the field, with the significant omission of Heinlein. But here are Asimov, Bradbury, Clarke, del Rey, Gold, Kornbluth, Kuttner-Moore, Leiber, Leinster, Simak, Tenn, Wyndham--this is truly an all-star cast. Some doubtfals are included too: Judith Merril, William Morrison, Robert Sheckley. These are not big names, when compared with the others, but the presence of the first can be explained because Merril is also Mrs. Pohl; the other two are probably Pohl clients. I haven't read this anthology yet--there's a gorgeous and gorgeously reproduced two-cover jacket by (I think) Powers--but I expect to start it during the next week. I've only browsed so far, and the browsing looks good. The

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Kuttner-Moore story, by the way, concerns a Quatt Wunkery, and may have recaptured that Padgett flavor which made it so hard for me to believe that the dull, Merrittesque Kuttner of "The Dark World" and other novels in Startling also wrote "Mimsy Were the Borogoves."

One thing that's also fairly exciting is the editorial note at the back of Star Science Fiction Stories (the title, by the way, had once been intended for a William Tenn-edited promag that never got issued). The note expresses faith in science fiction, a refreshing attitude from a firm which has not bothered to print any mysteries, and asserts that Ballantine will hope to publish the finest line of sf books in the field. They intend embarking on a program to include short story collections, some by a single author, and full-length novels--all originals. I deduce something good brewing here.

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The other twelve Ballantine Books released through mid-April should not go unnoticed. One has made the best-seller lists (the hardcover edition) which is truly unique: that a book (Executive Suite) should sell enough \$3 hardcovers to make best-seller lists, even though a 35¢ edition is easily obtainable. I mean to read this book some day, because I'm

told that it's worth reading.

Then, there's the documentary: Why Did They Kill? by John Bartlow Martin. This is a study in juvenile delinquency, a meritorious topic but one on which I can't spend time. This is the only non-fiction item so far in the Ballantine list. Then, there are five westerns--for Redd's benefit, they're by Luke Short, Frank Bonham, Jack Schaefer, Clay Fisher, and Frank O'Rourke.

The other seven "straight" novels are these: The Golden Spike by Hal Elson, a novel of juvenile drug addiction; All My Enemies, by Stanley Baron, some sort of suspense story; Tides of Time, by Emile Dancoen, a tale of life in the slums of a French port; The Wheel on the Hearth, by Lucia Moore, a story of the Oregon Trail (should I have called this a western?) and The Red Gate by Laselle Gilman (who's written a little s-f), about the Korean War.

All in all, Ballantine Books bear watching. These first sixteen have catapulted the firm right up with Signet in sales--Executive Suite has sold nearly 200,000 in paper covers (and about 8,000 in hard)--and Ian Ballantine has once again shown himself a man to be reckoned with in the publishing field.

This is a hell of a way to end an article, but I might as well include here the fact that since typing the first few stencils, I've managed to read the Permabooks anthology, Seven Arts, and found it a dull and pretentious collection of scraps with a few bright spots, not enough to justify the 50¢ price. The other Perma item, New Voices, is much bigger and looks considerably better.

Somehow the discussion of fantasy in Penguin books has gotten sidetracked, and now I fear I won't be able to make a regular article out of it. Instead, I'll just throw off some notes each mailing on the topic, if only to interest Harry Warner.

It's unfortunate that the vast majority of fantasy titles in the Penguin and related series is either out of print or not available in the United States. For instance, those two choice s-f items, Last and First Men (Stapledon) and Back to Methuselah (Shaw) were published in England in 1939 or so, and are now thoroughly out of print anywhere. (The American branch of Penguins told me that they have no intention of including the Shaw sf item in their series of Shaw's plays.) Last and First Men is the only work of fiction--if you can call it that--ever published in the Pelican series of non-fiction items. This Stapledon item, one of my favorites, is now rare; Ken Slater tells me that the 6d. edition was last seen offered for \$4.20!

Another group which is not part of the extremely limited American Penguin list is the H.G. Wells series. These may still be in print in England; I got my copies second-hand from the English fan who has supplied me with stacks of United Kingdom paperbacks.

Fifteen HGWells volumes have been published by Penguins; ten of them came out in editions of 100,000 in 1946 to commemorate Wells' 80th birthday; he didn't live to see them in print. Of this group (Penguin did a similar stunt on Shaw's 90th) four are stellar: War of the Worlds, Island of Doctor Moreau, The Invisible Man, and The Time Machine and Other Stories.

There may be other Wells science fiction someplace in the prodigious Penguin list, but, since there's no complete checklist of the thousands of titles since 1936, I haven't located any others as yet.

Another of the early Penguins--1937--is also unobtainable now, I think. It's J.D. Beresford's The Hampdenshire Wonder, a smooth and readable 1911 superchild story which Olaf Stapledon openly acknowledged as the predecessor of Odd John. In 1939, another Beresford novel, reportedly sf, was issued: The Camberwell Miracle. I have a copy, located by my pricoloss British chum, but haven't yot read it.

Don't get the idea that all Penguin fantasy is confined to the out-of-print 1937-39 era. Only last month they issued Charles Williams' Many Dimensions. If you like Williams, you'll love this story. The price is 2/-, which means the cost is 28¢ in England or 50¢ over here--but you can't buy it here, says a little black line on the back cover: Not For Sale in the U.S.A. The same line is also found on the Penguin edition of The Golden Ass and on the collected poems of T.S. Eliot. The reason, I think, is neither censorship nor discrimination, but just copyright difficulties. The Golden Ass, for example, has now been published in a Pocket Books Cardinal edition, so all is not lost. And there's no ban on receiving such books from Britons, and I imagine Ken Slater can supply anyone who wants a copy of the Williams book.

That, I think, is enough talk of Penguins. I have several dozen or more other fantasy titles which I'll discuss in future mailings, for the edification of the publishers of Horizons and Sky Hook and for anyone else who may be interested. There are a few fantasy Penguins of genuine interest, since they're reprints of books which are now quite scarce.

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and may I remark that that statement has nothing whatever to do with science fiction fandom?

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At the risk of being considered pro-British, I'm going to reprint the following absolutely irrelevant item from The New Statesman and Nation, Sept. 6, 1952:

The Laws of Science

During all the present nervousness about science and the progress of science, very little has been written or said about the greatest advance of recent years. This is in the matter of writing about science for scientists to read. The volume of this writing which floods the world daily, weekly, and monthly, would fill almost anything of which the reader cares to think; every week librarians refill the Recent Additions shelves with fresh volumes; the post offices of the world tremble under the mounds of journals, rolled into bundles, bursting out of their envelopes, and thumping onto doormats followed by the curses of postmen.

The importance of this advance cannot be overemphasized. For an expon-

ent of any ordinary branch of science, the time taken to read all the publications germane to his subject would amount to about 28 hours a day. This is what scientists mean by "the modern crisis in science." There may be other crises, but they take time to penetrate to laboratories. In practice, it is necessary to take advantage of the extensive abstracting service offered by the larger scientific associations to catch up on the last six months or so in one furious hunt through the indexes; for, despite the difficulties, it is no longer considered respectable to remain unaware of progress by other workers in one's own branch of research. This might seem an advantage, duplication of effort being wasteful and costly; but it seems less so when one is confronted by the wall full of bound volumes of abstracts which represents the very first line of inquiry. Indexers do their best to make the work easier, especially in chemistry, where the same compound can exist under at least six equally likely (or unlikely) names; but when they become enthusiastic about their systems they tend to convert a laborious hunt into something resembling a mathematical crossword puzzle.

All this has had a lasting effect on research, which now consists of thinking of something which no one else has done before, and then doing it as quickly as possible before they have a chance to. The written record, The Literature, as its slaves call it, is supreme. No longer could Sherlock Holmes carry on chemical research and solve other people's mysteries; all his skill at the second art would have to be used continually at the first. The new laws of science are very simple, and may in fact be reduced to a single one. It is considered cheating to repeat any experiment which has already appeared in The Literature, except, of course, for the purpose of refuting some rival's claims, or in industry. (This is regarded with the same horror as the demon Trade inspired a century ago. Industry is not spoken about. It is only a means of obtaining money.) Should one be unfortunate or careless enough to repeat someone else's work inadvertently, any account of this accident must start off with at least two paragraphs explaining that "this result was obtained independently of the work of Schaulmoogr and Knopxski (Journal of the Outer Mongolian Astronomical Society, 1952, XXXI, 22330-22335)...prior to the publications of Schaulmoogr et al... extends the work of Schaulmoogr and his co-workers...and anyway, we did it first, so there, only it took six months to get it published."

The Literature itself is of incredible size and complexity; the number of journals runs into thousands, and although some of these are of rather specialist interest, e.g., the American Cranberry Growers Journal, several hundred are of a depressingly general nature, and require reading by everyone. British journals are Punch coloured, and share with that journal several other characteristics; German journals appear at first glance to be so serious as to be forbidding, especially as one or two still use Gothic type. This has obviously occurred to the editors, who throw in a sop to the Alices in all of us by promising a definite number of Abbildungen, if not conversations. These pictures are usually disappointing. French journals are entirely mathematical. Whatever subject they deal with, their general format suggests an unhappy compromise between Humanite and a textbook of advanced calculus. This may be because the French see everything in so logical a light that mathematics explains it all, or that French printers are not quite sure what science is, but are determined to make it impressive. To find out which reason is the most important would necessitate reading a

French journal, and this is not likely to happen. American journals are written in American, which makes things so obscure that it is almost not cheating to repeat an American experiment.

Japanese journals are sometimes in English, sometimes in Japanese with English summaries, and in one fatal case, the Journal of the Agricultural Chemical Society of Japan, entirely in Japanese. The advertisements look very attractive. This custom of adding English summaries is probably the greatest triumph of British imperialism; it spreads to Italy, Spain, China, and South America, and one could be very pleased about it if it were not really intended for the U.S. In Russia, as might be expected, nothing peculiar can be found except an occasional sudden picture of Marshal Stalin, complete with a few lines of the mirror-writing that passes for a language in Russia, describing the debt owed by chemistry, physics, or basket-weaving to his great example.

The thought of all these journals, crowding the international postbags, each one representing the work of perhaps dozens of scientists, is so terrifying that it induces the kind of despairing stupor inseparable from world-thinking. It gives the impression of man as a blind, tunneling animal, throwing out an enormous pile of knowledge behind him which he has not time to examine--especially when one considers the time that this has been going on. It appears at first sight that all chemistry was discovered in 1870 (in Germany) and all physics in 1910 (in Britain and points North), while astronomy grows more peculiar as its records are being read. The only hopeful side to the matter is that it is very pleasant to sit quietly in a library and see science advancing all round one, without the slightest necessity to go back to the bench and make it advance oneself; this kind of relaxation is really the reason why so few scientists, in the end, actually go mad.

--Terence McLaughlin.

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Since doing my mailing comments for the 62nd mailing, the Boggs post-mailing has arrived, containing Fapa Newsletter, Celophais, and a stray Sapszine which seems to have no valid existence in either organization and is probably the first non-Saps Sapszine. Since Celophais should really have come in the mailing (poor Redd is tarnishing his Superfan medal) I might as well break my rule on discussing postpostings and say that I liked this one, particularly the "Basic" Library.

Of course, all sorts of crap can sneak through if you call it "Basic"--there's no doubt that EE Smith and Burroughs could hardly be left out of such a list. I was just a bit surprised to see Ward Moore's Greener Than You Think omitted, and all of Eddison. More Taine and less Throne Smith might have been an improvement, but it's hard to quarrel with most of your selections. My only objection is that the list is much too comprehensive to be "basic." Miller's idea of two lists of 25 is a good one. (Incidentally, a British poll just chose Asimov's "Foundation" as the best s-f story of all time, over anything by Wells, Heinlein, Bradbury, or anybody else. Personally, I find this ridiculous. # And I note you omit all of W.H. Hodgson from your list. He must be 1953's Forgotten Fantasite. Probably 750 of the Chicon's thousand have never heard of him. # This may be the last page for this issue; dunno.

Well, I guess it isn't the last page after all. These final two are being tacked on several weeks later, and in the interval I've had time to read Permabook's' anthology of new writing, New Voices. This is a hefty 380-page item in small type, and includes a lot of stories (ranging in length from a one-paragraph fragment up.) All the authors represented are students at New York's New School, in Greenwich Village. I don't know how they go about teaching writing at the New School, but it's obvious that many of these stories were originally done as homework: too many of them revolve around the same themes for it to be coincidence.

It seems that there's a bunch of angry men at work here; most of the stories are nothing more than tape-recorder images of everyday life, and that can be a profoundly depressing experience at such great lengths. Readers whose fictional experiences are limited to s-f are in for some awful jolts from New Voices. It may not be good writing, and it's certainly not cheerful stuff, but the book is worth a glance and more.

I've also received The Abyss of Wonders by Perley Poore Sheehan, the long-delayed second (and final?) item in Lloyd Arthur Eshbach's ambitious collector series, Polaris Press. This is in the same fine format as its predecessor, Francis Stevens' Heads of Cerberus; the only differences are in coloring of binding and slipcase--Stevens green, Sheehan maroon--and that the Stevens had deckled edges, while the other has trimmed and stained edges. In both cases, fine jobs of bookmaking.

The story itself--from 1915 All-Story--looks to be dated, but I recall having the same apprehensions before reading the delightful Cerberus. For those who haven't heard: Polaris Press is a series of specially-manufactured limited editions, available only from the publisher, L.A. Eshbach of Reading, Pa., at \$3 each; 1500 of each title are printed. I don't think the series has been a success, and I've heard that the second book is the last.

Ballantine Books: at the recent Fan-Vet Convention in New York, Arthur C. Clarke (a surprise guest) announced that he'd have a collection of short stories published by Ballantine. Now, Ballantine supposedly uses only original stuff, but I see that one of the latest, Stories of Sudden Truth, is a collection of already-published short stories. So, I doubt that the Clarke book will be all-new; it's scarcely worth his while to turn out a whole bookful of new short stories.

Like a lump of the ould sod is the sudden upsurge in Unknown-type mags. H.L. Gold originally planned his Beyond for 1950 appearance, but somehow it got sidetracked till 1953. I don't particularly care for the cover format or the cover painting, but the mag seems to have recaptured that elusive Unknown flavor pretty well. On a lower plane is Del Rey's similar venture, Fantasy Fiction. I haven't read the second issue yet, but the first was hopelessly botched by the inclusion of the Conan novel. (I hope this is the last unpublished Howard story to see print. The chap has been dead since 1936, but unpublished stories of his have been floating up with unfortunate regularity.) In the first issue of the Del Rey item, I liked the Paul Anderson novelet best, though it was a trifle self-conscious in its efforts to recapture UNK style. I liked a couple of the shorts, but most left me cold--as did, I must point out, most of the 1939-1940 Unknown short stories. The Bok covers for the first two issues of the Del Rey mag were glorious things, weren't they?

The original of the cover of #1, I'm told, was considerably better than its magazine appearance, mostly because Bok cavalierly disregards the limitations of three-color reproduction in painting his covers. I've also learned from a member of Del Rey's editorial staff that the background on Bok's painting for #2 was originally filled with all sorts of things which looked like hell when reduced to digest size (Bok does his canvasses on a huge scale)--so for publication Del Rey had all of the background things painted out to provide the lovely clear-cut picture which showed up on the cover. It's rare that editorial tamperings ever improve a cover!

This reminds me that I don't believe anyone has ever done a comprehensive analysis of the Unknown-type fantasy, discussing the various changes in policy which UNK underwent, first in 1941, and then in 1943. Here's a chance for someone.

Did anyone notice the peculiar collection of story titles in Fantasy Fiction #2? "Samsi"--"Rachaela"--"Sylvia" This sort of thing happens to an editor every once in a while. In 1943, some chap wrote to Campbell, pointing out that six titles in one issue began with "C," and that JWC seemed to have a predilection for one-word titles beginning with that letter--"Culture," "Census," "Cuckoo," "City," "Controller," etc. All this is pretty pointless, but it's wonderful how it fills the pages.

Folks who passed up John Collier's "Fancies and Goodnights" in the \$4 edition have no excuse for missing it now that it's out in a Bantam 35¢ edition. Another recent paperback is van Vogt's "Destination: Universe," from Signet. This includes nine short stories, very few from his heyday period of 1939-42. Most of the stories in this book served to strengthen my conviction that vV is a very poor writer with a fabulous imagination. (Of course, I think his early "monster" stories, his first few Weapons Shop stories--particularly the title yarn--and some of his other pre-1943 stuff is top grade. But "Slan" is just run-of-the-mill, and his later stuff is too obscure to have much punch as s-f (though such things as the null-A stories make wonderful puzzles. Figuring out just what the hell is happening, and why, is a lot more rewarding than trying to identify with the hero.)

Two other paperbacks which could be skipped despite the low price are Jerry Sohl's "The Haploids" and Murray Leinster's "Space Platform." The latter is a competently-told but uninteresting story, and the former is one huge cliché.

Rocket Stories is probably the only mag that's ever had two first issues. Seems Del Rey missed a deadline, and the earliest he could distribute the mags was March, though that was the cover date. Almost all of the undistributed copies were redated April, but apparently a few slipped out without the overprint. I've got one #1 dated March and another dated April, and I suppose this'll be a minor rarity.

And hats off to Sam Moskowitz and Hugo Gernsback for publishing the most attractive prozine the field has known (funny how short-lived was Fantastic's claim to that title) and also for publishing some of the weakest fiction we've seen in ages.

--Bob Silverberg