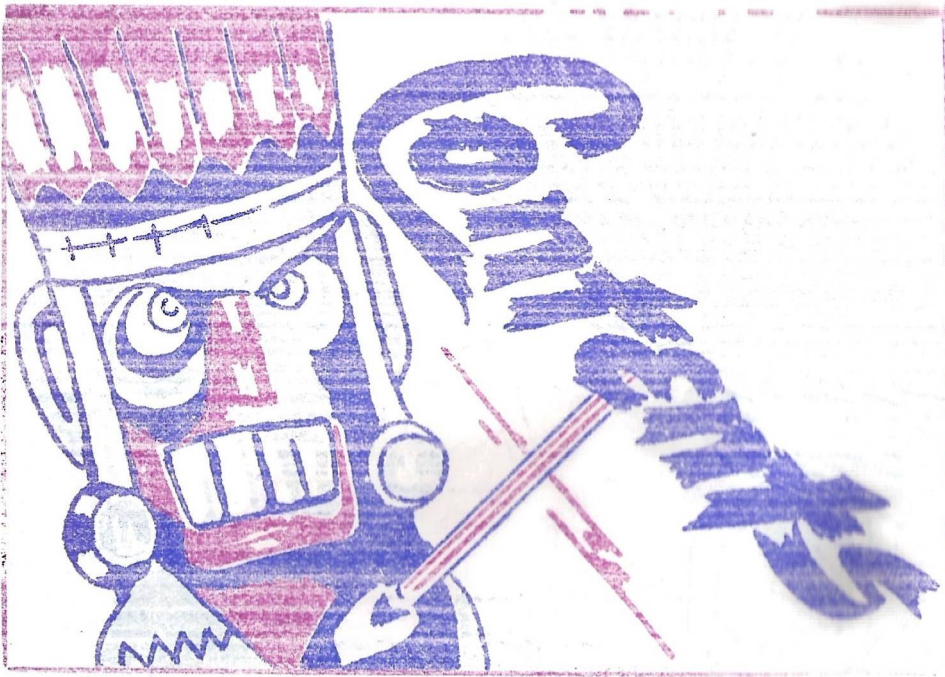


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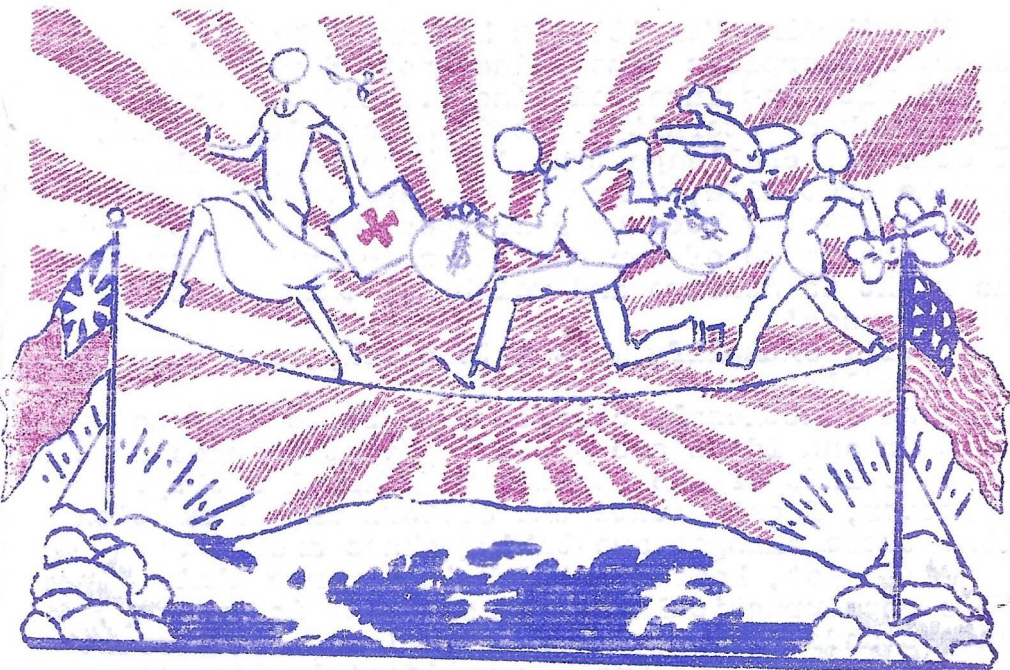
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Olon F. Wiggins	EDITOR
P. J. Searles	ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Donald A. Wollheim	CONTRIBUTING EDITOR
H. S. Kirby	CONTRIBUTING EDITOR
James M. Rogers	ART EDITOR
D. D. Hamilton	ART CONTRIBUTOR

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SEEKERS OF A BETTER TOMORROW
 by G. Ken. Chapman

There is a school of Thought that has it that Man's philosophy is based upon ego. Whether this concept is accepted by the materialistic-minded masses, or not, is of no interest! The idea has been met in fantasy-fiction, of the better class, on several occasions and is of interest to us as a consequence.

It has been truly said of us that we 'live threescore years and we balance it with all eternity! We are it! Our every thought, act and word is in some way given to partiality and bias. We are specific and inequitable, instead of impartial and universal.

I cannot eradicate from my mind, when contemplating Man and his philosophical outlook, the wise, dry humour of Doctor Vladimer Kazekevich of the Columbia University, who said that 'the only truly impartial publication' he knew was 'the telephone book'. The example is exaggerated but adequate!

Mr. Abraham Merritt, in his magnificent, literary masterpiece "The Blind Spot" dared the whole world with one inspired line.... "Did you ever stop and think of eternity? It is a very long time". I echo his challenge that 'we have no privilege to assume that life, which we contend to be everlasting, instantly becomes retrospect when it goes beyond the lapse of our conscious individuality, and no right to measure and weigh all things with our five senses'.

I will exemplify more extensively, and more prosaically!

I am doubtlessly correct if I state that modern methods and ideas are producing vast changes in the average life of the average individual entity. Moreover, I only state the obvious when I mention that these changes are taking shape around us.

We do not, however, think it strange that all this goes practically unnoticed. It is, we say, understandable! The human animal is not apparently born to observe natural or artificial alteration as it goes along, and it is only from a standpoint in the future that even a reasonably coherent and neutral view is obtained.

History, for instance, we know, though from experience rather than actual preception, is being made every day of our lives, but it is also obvious, from the frequent major calamities, that that 'history' is not really revelent to the denizens of today's life....it is our progeny who will appreciate its finer points to a fuller extent and who will derive from today's events the full, immense amplitude of the transformations that must be taking place before us all.

It is the same with all our arts and sciences!

Changes, barely perceptible but infinitely positive nevertheless, are taking place in our every walk of life and existence.

Now, a normally intelligent and rational member of our species at times gives, at least a few idle moments to retrospect, both practical and romantic, but in the entire period-life of our race, this type of general philosophy has improved our admittedly young civilization but infinitely little.

A plea, then, is for more general practise of the gentle art or, possibly, one should say science, of prognosis. Our greatest modern thinkers, of whom perhaps the greatest of all is the British author-philosopher Mr. H.C. Wells, are all expert in this type of conception and, if this group of sages can do little about it, they can, at least, put their fingers very speedily to the evil points and the errors in our present civilization.

I take the liberty of refreshing your memories here, with a few quotations from Wells' great study "The Camford Visitation":-

"Here is this new mankind, world-wide, able to talk to itself all over the planet, able to fly to the ends of the earth, possessed of what would have seemed a hundred years ago incredible power, and it produces no sort of brain. It has just the old tired-out ganglia of its disunited past.

"Everything is becoming uncontrollable. Things are just happening to you.

"You have given birth to a new world and behold! The newborn creature insists upon being mental defective.

"You realize neither the dangers nor the possibilities of human life. You fail to organize, you fail to educate. Everywhere the world falls into disorder for the want of the mental leadership...

"Your academic triviality is the half-spititual triviality of inadequate minds conscious of their essential failure.

"The ingenuity of your race, working without coordination or foresight, produces one discon-

needed invention after another, so that mechanical power grows in your world like a cancer.

"If mankind fails it will be through the failure of its teachers, the weakness of its schools, the obstinacy, the wilful obstruction of its universities."

The great H.G. is not merely a cynic, a critic, and with such sentences as these:-

"But sound thinking and sufficient knowledge can dominate feeling", and -

"You have to pull your minds together", said the Voice, "and soon. Or you'll just kill yourselves off the planet with your diverse suggestions, your uncontrolled hates and your half-witted mechanical cleverness...And there are such splendid things now for you to do".

He attempts to tell us what we have to do to ourselves to bring about an improvement in the temperament of our race.

You can find any amount of similar suggestions in "The Shape of Things to Come", "The Rights of Man" and most of his other books, even that fantastic feast "The Time Machine".

"The Rights of Man" is of immense importance and interest, and outlines a 'Declaration of Man's Rights', upon which a new world order could be reasonably built, with a considerable chance of success.

With greater support and impetus, I am sure, our progressive thinkers could pull our world out of the severe muddle it is in today.

That is why I have become interested in the Futurian League. It is in that 'futurian' outlook - that ability to think 'terrestrially' instead of 'internationally' - that I can foresee Man's Will to Live. In a war-torn world, with destruction proceeding on devastatingly ordered lines around me as I write - the nightly London air raid warning sounded an hour ago - that attitude is sweet balm to me!

Professor Spargo of the Northwestern University at Evanston, Ill. once told the students of that distinguished seat of Learning, "In history, the important thing isn't to memorise a date - you must take it some place". Why, I contest, do we not try taking some 'dates' into the future?

This is something of the nature of things! September 3, 1949 was, we will all agree, one of those 'dates' the good Professor refers to - History was certainly made on that Black Day.

Now, I am not a pacifist! Far from it, but I rigorously challenge that the men who were responsible for the decisions that led up to War, could not have taken 'September 3, 1939' far into the future. I take it for granted that the decisions in the dictator-countries were made by men who are, at least, partially insane, and it is a further proof of our inability to future-think that we allow such creatures to exist. A race with an intelligent interest in their future would exterminate such criminal specimens at birth.

Trouble is this - Jones and Brown, and the man next door, and all the rest of that respectable and much to be respected body of individuals we denominate 'the public', aren't interested enough in their own prospects to do anything about it at all.

That is where the Futurian League can 'do its stuff', if I may so crudely put it!

'Til now the Futurians have been chiefly engaged in two things - their ingenious and inspiring envisagements - and - their feud with New Fandom.

The first of these two activities is so magnificent in scope that it makes its counterpart seem inadequate and incongruous in comparison, as well as being fantastically out of place with Futurian ideals.

I do not attempt to start a peacemaking act in

this article for, at this moment, with all due regards to them, I am not interested in New Fandom. They are essentially, I assume from their title, an organization to improve science-fiction and everything connected therewith, and as a fantasy-enthusiast, I am keenly interested in their activities.

That, however, is not the present point! I appeal to Futurians to begin to do, yes DO, something.

Fine words are useless unless you back them by even finer action. You are the people to set to work clearing up all this mess on poor old Terra. You have the right ideas, and the world must surely be ready for a total change in political science. It has already been proven that you can work - you have spited no end of fury upon New Fandom....now go to it, to the bigger issue.

I challenge you to work off some of your ardour upon the realization of your splendid ideals.

You have a field - the fantasy field - in which to make a grand start. There you have the cream of Terra's imaginations to work upon. No part of its multitude of genius need be unexploited - from our Stapledon, our Eric Temple Bell and our H.G. Wells ...through our John Michel and Doc Lowndes, even to our most undistinguished reader of fantasy fiction, of any category, you have individuals whose intellect has been trained to think in terms unfamiliar to the layman -- of cosmic figures, of other dimensions and of future civilizations - then they are likely to be most receptive members of the homo-sapien race for you to work upon.

Start at once, I pray you! Try your ideals out upon them, vigorously! Make big efforts to gain impetus, both in fantasy and in the outside,

skeptical world of realism. Forget your quarrels in the industry of working towards your glorious Goal! Above all, show us, in a world gone mad, that there is at least one band of braves, no matter how small that band may be, who are working for Man's improvement as a race and as a whole.

Les you think you are too small to be considered....too insignificant to count, I quote, this last time from a book you will recognize without my telling:-

"I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about".

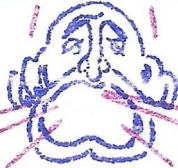
Arise, then, Futurians! Get to work! And, let us ALL become "SEEKERS OF A BETTER TOMORROW".

WHY DID I DO IT?

There was a story in the newspapers recently about an English clergyman running a night club in Alexandria, Egypt, so that British soldiers would not be gypped by other such establishments. Probably a night club proprietor might start giving sermons in retaliation.

Who can remember the name of the O. Henry story in which a saloon keeper put himself out of business? He got tight and delivered such a powerful lecture on prohibition that his business went bankrupt.

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YE FANTASIE BOOKES - DAW

Science fiction fans have been bombarded with adds for Stanley Weinbaum's book THE NEW ADAM in virtually every issue of the Ziff-Davis magazines. The publishers, of course, are Ziff-Davis and the date is 1939. Weinbaum is a name that has been built up to mean a great deal to fans. It sort of grew on fandom after a terrific build-up was given the reception of his story "A Martian Odyssey" which by accident happened to be about the only good story in an otherwise mediocre issue of WONDER STORIES where it first appeared. Following this initial surprise success, Weinbaum was systematically built up and press-agented until he was billed as the greatest writer of the time (which he never was). His stories were raved over in advance even when they could scarcely merit such ravings, and his friends who happened to be writers or editors played him up BIG. It is true that he did

write some very fine stories, that he introduced unique characters into science-fiction by transposing Peter Rabbit and Alice-in-Wonderland animals into extra-terrestrials. But that this feat (a simple hack writer technique incidentally) should warrant adoration has always seemed a bit silly. His "Dawn of Flame" stories were his best precisely because they were not really science-fiction but experiments at character portrayal. The characters portrayed may not have been too real to sticklers, but they were attempts at better than pulp writing.

THE NEW ADAM, having been one of the manuscripts either universally rejected while SGW was alive or else one that he preferred not to submit, has been dug out of his dusty files and presented to an indifferent world with a big splash. In the advance adds in FANTASTIC ADVENTURES we read the comments of four writers who have supposedly read the ms. in advance. Two of them, Ralph Mine Farley and Editor Ray Palmer who knew Weinbaum personally praise the story to the skies. But take a good look at the remarks of the others. Edgar Rice Burroughs says merely that the manuscript is strange and that he believes it will prove interesting to the "died-in-the wool" fans. No one can find fault with such a non-committal remark. "Strange", "interesting". This is neither good nor bad criticism. No one can deny that the active fan will be interested. But look at the quoted remarks of A. Merritt. Not a single reference to the book at all! He merely says that Weinbaum, as a writer, might have some day been able to outshadow Cabell, whom Merritt likes. This means very little at all. One suspects that the editor was unable to find anything actually complimentary in Mr. Merritt's comments on the book.

The book has been dealt with in a review in SUPER SCIENCE STORIES in a fairly adequate manner.

It is this reviewer's opinion that the reference to the book as having taken nine years to write is deluding. It is probable that the book was written nine years ago before SGW made his first success, laid away, and dragged out shortly before he died, for possible re-writing. This constitutes the reference to nine years in the writing. Certainly I refuse point blank to believe that this work has been actually nine years in production. Its style of writing shows the amateur, it is stodgy, uninspired, unimaginative in action, fails to do justice to the idea in scarcely any manner at all. His characters do not live. None of them. The sample of poetry included as a bit of the superman's writings would make even a Miske blush with shame. And the "Edmond's Circle" thing is reminiscent of the Astrology magazines. THE NEW ADAM should have been left buried. It will not do anything to perpetuate the memory of the best of SGW, it may do a lot to drag him down.

DIALECTICS VERSUS ENTROPY

By Bowen Conway

Science fiction fans are all familiar with the entropy theory of the universe. Entropy is a process based upon the second law of thermodynamics and operates through the gradual dissipation of heat and energy throughout the universe to a common level of low temperature heat. The popular conception of the end of this entropy process is amply delineated in sf. stories such as Schachner's "Entropy", Kaletsky's "End of the Universe" and on a more elaborate, detailed and sensitive scale in Stapleton's "Star Maker".

Two news items in a recent issue of Trend, the international feature section of the Brooklyn Sunday Eagle tend to shed new light on this heat death theory. The first item concerns a speech made by Albert Einstein before the American Scientific Congress when he stated that physics admittedly no longer possesses any logical theoretical basis. The only certainty left, he said, seemed to be Heisenberg's Principle of Uncertainty. Nature, said Einstein, seems to be operating on the throw-of-the-dice method. At the same time he disclaimed any belief in this idea himself.

The second item was a restatement by Dr. Henry Morris Russel of Princeton of the classical entropy proposition. The good doctor saw for our cosmos only the usual slow decay, at the end of which was to be a final state of quiescence.

An article by the internationally famous Professor J.B.S. Haldane appearing recently in the Science Section of the New York Sunday Worker brings immediate correlation to these two items. Professor Haldane, prominent British scientist, Marxist and Chairman of the Editorial Board of the London Daily Worker who has been connected

with the British Government through its Air Raid Precautions (ARP) Sequence stated the proposition that, assuming human society, a state of being, exerting and radiating forces, to be influenced in its development by the theory of dialectical materialism and vice-versa, the whole tending to raise the level of the dialectic and with it the condition of society, in a rising spiral, it was logical to assume that the universe, a state exerting and radiating forces was subject to the same changing conditions. In a word, what he meant was that natural laws no longer need be considered as unchanging and eternal, but dynamic.

Dialectical Materialism is a theory which emerged chiefly through the work of the philosopher Hegel and later of the social scientists Marx and Engels during the earlier part of the last century. It is the theory that human society is, always has been and always will be in a state of conflicting opposites, that at certain stages of the development of this condition, changes occur which are alternately quantitative and qualitative and tend to raise the basis (the cause) of these conflicts to a higher and higher level.

Viewed from the standpoint that dynamism is better than staticism (and the whole past history of the human race confirms this comparison) dialectics utterly antiquates both the Uncertainty Viewpoint as explained by Einstein and the static theories upheld by Russell, replacing them with a developing theory which arises from and influences the forces released by the ever conflicting, ever changing phases of the Cosmos.

Applies to the cosmical outlook, dialectics raises the status of the cosmos from the conception of a sentient whole, developing onward and upward, not backward and downward, toward an at present unknowable goal.

When, at the present stage of human development as the face of the planet is being demonstrably altered by the operation of forces within human society itself and the best the world's greatest "idealistic" scientists can offer is a slow decline to a final dark (a conception common to all non-Marxist thought) it is perhaps time that stf. fans and other "star-begottens" began to seriously question the present static theories of cosmic evolution.

If it is true that natural laws are subject to change....and that is a postulate which the present confused state of science would indicate were true because it is the only postulate which solves all contradictions....it is true that entropy is nothing more than a "surface" phase and it is true that the universe will suffer no heat-death or any other change leading to dissipation and dissolution.

The story goes as follows:- "We were building a chimney here (England) of brick 150 feet high and the cockney bricklayer never took shelter, however severe the raid. He just went on with the job and one day, during a particularly severe bother, when things were fairly dickey, Nazi planes heading our direction, he poked his head over the top of the chimney and shouted out:

"Below there!

Labourer at the bottom looked up and said 'Hello'.

Bricklayer said: "Send up three stretchers, three buckets of cement, and three cheers for the Red, White and Blue".

"It cheered those of us who were on the roof watching, very considerably."

STEFIANA NO. 6
by Ralph Milne Farley
"Before Adam"

The three great mysteries of human existence are: (1) life and death; (2) time, and (3) dreams.

The book now under review is based on and gives an explanation of one well-known type of dreams, namely dreams of falling.

Jack London is the author, and the book was published in 1907 by M.A. Donohue & Co., Chicago and New York.

London reports having had terrifying dreams throughout his childhood, dreams of things he had never experienced or even ever heard of in real life; nuts on trees instead of in grocery stores, trees of sorts he had never known, lions, blueberries, and snakes. There never was a human being in any of those dreams. Not until he went to college did he learn the secret of these dreams - a professor of psychology told him. London says:-

"For instance, there was the falling-through-space dream - the commonest dream experience, one practically known, by first-hand experience, to all men.

"This, my professor told me, was a racial memory. It dated back to our remote ancestors who lived in trees. With them, being tree dwellers, the liability of falling was an ever-present menace. Many lost their lives that way; all of them experienced terrible falls, saving themselves by clutching branches as they fell toward the ground.

"Now a terrible fall, averted in such fashion, was productive of shock. Such shock was productive of molecular changes in the cerebral cells. These molecular changes were transmitted to the cerebral cells of progeny, became, in short,

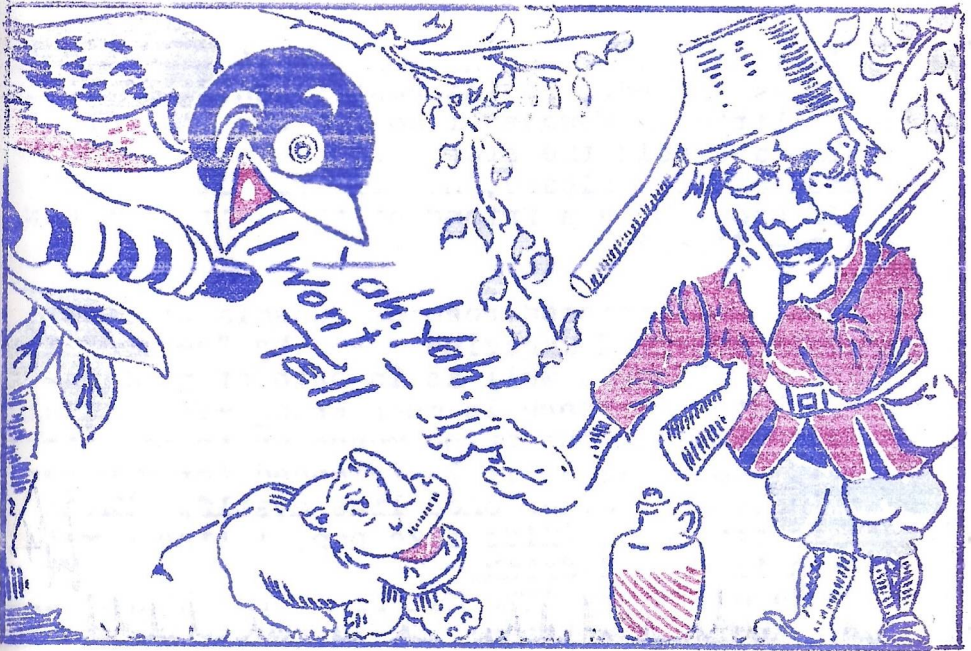
racial memories. Thus, when you and I, asleep or dozing off to sleep, fall through space and awake to sickening consciousness just before we strike, we are merely remembering what happened to our arboreal ancestors, and which has been stamped by cerebral changes into the heredity of the race.

"There is nothing strange in this, any more than there is anything strange in an instinct. An instinct is merely a habit that is stamped into the stuff of our heredity, that is all. It will be noted, in passing, that in this falling dream which is so familiar to you and me and all of us, we never strike bottom. To strike bottom would be destruction. Those of our arboreal ancestors who struck bottom died forthwith. True, the shock of their fall was communicated to the cerebral cells, but they died immediately, before they could have progeny. You and I are descended from those that did not strike bottom; that is why you and I, in our dreams, never strike bottom".

(I have hit bottom in such dreams, but never with much of a jar.)

When he came to this realization of the meaning of these dreams, Jack London was able to piece together, into a coherent biography, the life story of one certain anthropoid ancestor of his, whose experiences and adventures he relived in sleep.

This story he gives to the world in autobiographical form in "Before Adam".



MISCELLANEA
by Trivia

Just to get it off my chest, I don't like people who brag about knowing a secret. Like kids, "Yah, yah, I know something you don't know". If the subject is a secret, then keep quiet about it. If it isn't a secret, then tell us. But for heaven sakes don't put on a mysterious, all knowing air.

I am thinking now of Leslie A. Croutch who had an article "Kelly-the Man" in a recent issue of "Spaceways". Mr. Croutch may be an estimable gentleman - I don't know him - but he irritated me by telling of a letter, apparently from Kline to Kelly, discussing the relationship of Farnsworth Wright and "Weird Tales" and all Croutch says is - "Really - you do not know, you cannot image, how wrong you have been about so many things".

Well, I am just a dabbler and know nothing of the subject (except that Weird was a grand magazine under Wright and is now a mausoleum of

pueriletics), and I am not greatly interested in Wright vs. Weird. My interest is in stories, not personalities. However I do believe that Croutch should have told the story or else omitted all mention of it. Please, no more kid stuff.

(If Croutch is a friend of the Editor of FAN, then I'm fired).

Have just finished reading "Cosmic Stories", Wellheim's second magazine. And by "second" I mean in quality as well as in date of publication. Not that there is much wrong with it, all right in its way but by no means up to his first effort. Reads as if it is intended for younger nuts instead of older ones like myself. Maybe that is the idea. Kids like pop, I like - well, bourbon is a good drink.

DAW's own story "The Man From the Future" was clever and well written. So was "The Secret Sense" by Osimor. The rest just so so, not in a class with several in "Stirring Science Stories".

After reading a few recent issues of various sci. magazines I realized one thing that is wrong with many stories. Of course there are a lot of things wrong with a lot of them, but one particular wrongness stood out. Too many authors get an original, sometimes startling, though and haven't any idea what to do about it. They seem to be unable to develop their plot, put little or no science into it, depict dull, stupid characters, and let the whole thing degenerate into a wild and wooly adventure story. Half the yarns nowadays sound like the wild west stories I read years ago with the exception that they are located in Venus or Rigel or in some other dimension instead of on the plains of Dakota.

For example, Arnold had a swell plot in "Mechanica" in Cosmic Stories and did nothing to develop it or make it real. Similarly with Gottsman's

effort (the lead story) in Stirring Science Stories. Still another example was "The Lost Planet" by Barry Cord in March Thrilling Wonder Stories - what was the mysterious Vortex and how did it operate?

These plots are too good to be wasted. What's the trouble? My guess is:-

(a) A lot of authors are just too lazy to write a real story. They want to dash off something in a hurry, see it in print, and then cash the check. If they took a little care the result would be a lot better.

(b) Some authors just don't know how to write and should go back to the farm. An original idea is no good unless there is worthwhile writing to back it up.

(c) Most authors don't know a thing about science (and not much about fiction). They should do a little serious reading about space, time, atomic reactions, astrophysics, etc. before putting words on paper. Look at Smith and Campbell. Maybe much of their science is fantastic and impossible today but at least they know something of science and distribute the knowledge throughout their stories. They are good, and no mistake about it. Campbell's "The Mightiest Machine" had a barrel full of science. Sure, much of it was screwy, but not impossible in theory. Also how about the "Mathematic" stories of Fearn? Of course it could not happen the way he told it, but don't forget there was considerable knowledge behind the tales.

I would suggest to budding authors that when they have a really first rate original idea, don't throw it away on a cheap story. Put some science into it, work over it carefully and then work over it again until it all comes to life. Let's have less haste and more quality.

Some day I'm going to write a stf. yarn myself -- and then throw it in a waste basket.

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THE ARTISTE SPEAKS
by D.H.

The printing department of FAN just dashed into the art department wildeyed "We have two blank pages left over, how shall we fill 'em up says they - with cuts or a story". Ah, says we in the absence of our Editor a decision must be made. Deep thought.....end of thought.

With heads up, chests expanded here we go for Fifty Thousand Artistes can't be wrong. Therefore we start with "quote": "Long before the beginning of even old English, people lived in what we now call England. These people, however, were not civilized. They left no written records except pictures carved on the rock walls of caves or on their polished stone tools".

Let that be as it may, for a moment we Artistes will hang our heads in shame until -- Damn that mouse every time we go thru our "Morgue" we find him chewing up our most valuable evidence. Why blast his hide, he's right after the very passage we need right now to counter quote - he must be a fifth columnist:

Saved in the nick of time, vive l'Art. Again we quote:

Back in 1800, only a little over a hundred years ago, there were fewer than a hundred thousand words in our vocabulary. NOW there are more than four hundred thousand - nearly half a million - Borrowed, adopted, invented, changed - we speak bits of almost every language in the world - yet what we speak is English. About a quarter of a million of these words, half of our vocabulary, have grown from only about eight hundred root words.

And so - on and on into the night and the second quart.

Probably the question most frequently heard by Fantasia's Artiste - is where do you get your ideas - yes, 'tis sad but true we are barbaric, not civilized - for most of our ideas are re-hashed, plus any additional ridiculous detail we may be able to imagine; however, a Fantasia drawing to be really successful must contain some element of truth and every detail should be either really funny or positively awe inspiring - not many are - but how many stories are.

Phew! Only half a page to go, but we must not leave you dangling - and fifty thousand artistes can't be wrong.

The language of the earliest people the Artiste can imagine - before history began - that is, before any written records - was probably not unlike BABY TALK. Of course, no one invented speech - Speech -communications with others by sound, bolstered up by signs and gestures - was bound to develop in an animal wired for sound. The instant man or any other animal for that matter wants something, has an emotion or feeling, he is urged to express, he speaks.

No one can be sure, but this very briefly stated, is one theory of the origin of language as worked out by Artistes - on the walls of caves before people became civilized.

Gee!!it's two o'clock and I am still rereading - but after all it takes two people to paint a picture - one to do the work and the other to stand by with an ax to chop the other's head off when the picture is finished.

