

SCI-FIC

Published nonchalantly
by Bob Tucker

VARIETY

number 4
Dec. 1941

Some months ago we started out in fandom a chain letter, designed to produce material for LeZ. As this is written that chain letter still is circulating. But what concerns us here is that one of

the contributing items that letter drew is published herein. Dick Wilson submitted it to LeZ, and altho we liked it, still it wouldn't fit into LeZ. So rather than return it and forever be in the bad graces of Mr Wilson, we shove it off on you herewith.

Anent the Dorothy Sanford story "A Point of View" printed in our last issue two mailings ago. Damon Knight asked in the last mailing who she was ((Gosh .. why didn't we turn that around)). Sanford is a professional author from California, a very good friend of mine. Altho she hasn't sold any science fiction she is tremendously interested in it, and mayhap will someday. Her sales are to slick womens and farm magazines; she worked a very short while on a San Diego radio station. This monkeyish "Point of View" thing is a rejected vignette from American. I expect to bring her to the Pacificon next year.

Also to Damon Knight's remarks on my reading of literature .. heheheh. What Damon doesn't know is that I have one of those books, "Condensed Literature to be Quoted by the Busy Man at the Proper Times". I find the impressions I make this way very telling.

We liked Trudy Kuslan's biting article in Sardonix. Still and at the same time it reads like a flareback, as if she had been hurt by something. Or someone. For despite the entertaining writing, she tells us nothing we do not already know or suspect. Phil Schumann's "Private World?" made engrossing reading. While we are on the subject, we take off our worn-out fedora to Paul Spencer, and thank him for the list of further Cabell books. Consider our interest aroused.

We are always reminded, along about this time of the year, of our dear loving cousin Si Gustily and his rocket ship experiment. These beer cans with the screw-on (and off) top make dandy ash trays you know. When empty you merely pound the top in with a hammer. Not so, Si. He rather fancied that protruding "nozzle" atop the can resembled a rocket tube. Which gave him an idea. Which he carried out. Which is why we now put forget-me-nots on his last resting spot. It seems he once filled a beer can with carbon-tetra-chloride and lit a match to it to see if it would "take off". We sigh for Si.

We realize this is hardly the proper place to comment on a fanzine like NFFF's Bonfire, but inasmuch as all NFFF officers are members of the FAPA, they doubtless will read the comment. In issue #2 of the mag, it is mentioned that the issue was turned out on a three hundred dollar hectograph. Ah! said we, just like the good old days at Mass. Tech., Repenche and Fanfare! But the words were choked off in our beard. We wound up the magazine wishing it had been turned out on a five dollar tray. We would have liked to read the President's message.

A word here for Nova, the new Michigan fanzine published by LEEvans the Ashleys, with sundry help by Counts and Weidenbeck; while we were there in November, they told us it costs them \$90 for the first issue!

CONCERNING "THE AMULET"by Dick Wilson

The book is titled The Amulet -- publisher unknown.

Allington Parmay is a writer and he has an amulet. It is a very unusual amulet which he found in the men's room of a Chinese bar on Doyers st. It takes him some time to discover that the amulet has the power to give him anything he wishes for.

When he first discovers this he becomes afraid of the amulet and won't touch it for a week, during which time he drinks a good deal of rye and thinks fearful thoughts. Gradually his fear leaves him and because he is a funny sort of duck, as most writers are, he doesn't wish for money, or women, or fame, or even a closetful of cigarets, altho he thinks of all these.

Instead, with the aid of his charm, he builds a tremendous underground vault and recreates in it a typical jungle, a battle-field, city streets, country lanes, a bedroom, a factory, an office and a ladies powder room. Then he creates people with problems and psychoses. He puts them in the settings they fit and, invisible, watches them.

Then, with time out for spasms of disgust, or incredulity, he writes about life. He becomes a very successful author. Many of his books are banned.

After awhile he becomes bored with his life-play. Parmay projects himself into the adventures that he creates for his characters. He has a lot of fun. He sails on pirate ships, flies in atomic-powered planes, wanders thru jungles in Africa, dodging cannibals and hangs out in a pseudo-Bowery

Once, in a moment of weakness, he creates the prototype of an exotically beautiful blonde movie star, gives her a sumptuous bungalow and lives with her for a week.

AFTER awhile Parmay's fiancee from the world of reality begins to get curious about his unusual "working hours" which sometimes keep her from seeing him for a month or more. She lets herself into his suburban house, and while looking for him stumbles on the door in the basement that leads to his subterranean testing grounds.

After much amazed wandering thru the huge, variegated rooms, quite by accident she finds the bungalow of the blonde pseudo-actress. She finds Parmay there, in the bedroom.

Suddenly her love, never too strong, turns to hate. Without having been seen, she hurries back thru Parmay's house to the police. The police come, not without much persuading, and break into Parmay's fantastic realm. A set-to with a bunch of gangsters whom Parmay has forgotten to oblivate in the South State street, Chicago, division whets the appetites of the police for blood and vengeance.

because the fiancee has forgotten the way, the cops keep stumbling into dens of lions and Arctic terrains and Dante's inferno and similar unpleasant places. At last they come upon the bungalow, the bedroom and the blonde. Parmay is doing well by all three.

The cops break in with drawn guns. Parmay grabs a gun off the night table and fires away, having no compunctions about killing what he considers products of his imagination, probably under the impression that he is a wanted criminal.

But finally Parmay is subdued and dragged back to the surface, nude and protesting. He is charged with murder.

Parmay is rushed to trial. An apathetic figure, he offers no defense & is speedily sentenced to life imprisonment. His fiancée, triumphant, exits to take up where she left off with a rich tea-ball manufacturer. The police, triumphant, seal up the entrance to Parmay's underground retreat.

Parmay, still in possession of his amulet, creates a double to serve his prison term, creates another entrance to his paradise and lives there - after with his imagination and its diverting products.

(Editor's note: We may be wrong, but we believe we can shed some light upon this interesting book. We faintly recall reading a copy of such in our long-ago youth, and if that same memory serves us aright, the book was published by some underground publisher in Australia, retailing, we believe, for about 29¢ a copy. Undoubtedly it is now out of print.)

AND THEN THERE WERE TWO

The why and where of Wisconsin fandom

-by Phil Schumann

And so, we of the badger state have at long last received a request for some news of Wisconsin fandom. We feel highly honored; all four of us. I really shouldn't say that. There are at least ten men in the state, that I know of, who are in any way connected with stf. There are undoubtedly more fantasy readers than that, but we are primarily concerned with those who show even the tiniest spark of enthusiasm. Of authors we have a goodly supply. There's Farley of So. Milwaukee, Berleth of Sauk City, and ummmmmmm. Let us continue. As to fans, active or otherwise, we are positively overcrowded.

Donn Brazier of Milwaukee (now in the army), Wallace Buchholz of Ripon, Arden Perry of Oshkosh, Paul Klingbiel of West Bend (now of Chicago) & myself, from Milwaukee. Five. Overcrowded.

After I met Donn it took him six months to get me interested in fandom. When I finally did, he conceived the idea of publishing a Wisconsin fan mag. Time passed and nothing was done about it. In the early summer he left for a vacation in Minnesota. When he returned I was not notified. I am still angry at not being told, but soon after his return and without my knowledge, Frontier was born. You can imagine what a shock I received to learn that I was in no way connected with its publication! And the worst of it was, even tho he lives barely seven blocks from me, I had to learn of its existence from a correspondent living seven hundred miles away. Naturally I was a bit put out, but I decided then and there to dive right in the middle of fandom. Soon I learned that writing letters, and many of them, grew to be quite a strain on the purse. To this day, in spite of the fact that I am a fan editor, I have only ten correspondants, and but four of them are "regulars".

At about this time I begin to harbor dreams of joining the ranks for good and putting out a fanzine, to be titled Fandom. Ackerman broke that bubble pretty quick. As most new fans do, I wrote to he for material, hardly expecting a reply. I was very much surprised when an article and letter arrived from him airmail, in record time.

He informed me of the existence of the mag New Fandom, for which fact I have never forgiven Mosky. ((And, we might add slyly, neither has the rest of fandom -editor)) So the name was switched to Urania, which sounded better and was easier to letter. This also flopped, as he knew of an English mag named Urania. ((We sometimes think he sees fanzines in his sleep. -editor))

After many sleepless nights and constant worrying, the name Centaur was conceived. LRChauvenet tells me I should have included in the first editorial an item about how I chose Centaur as "subtly symbolic of the union of lower and higher forms (fiction and science) into a splendid different whole". (science-fiction). To tell the truth I picked Centaur because it sounded good; without even knowing its real meaning. ((Bravo ... an honest man. Diogenes, blow out that lantern! -editor)) I had it confused with what they call a man who has reached the age of 100.

For four months, Centaur and the idea of a fanzine by that name was battered around from pillar to post, and practically scrapped several times as page after page was sloppily hectored, with enormous lapses of time between each. At first there were to be fifty copies of the mag, but the fact that upon one particular date every sheet after the 36th had not only ink upon it, but gelatin dessert as well, changed my mind. The number published was finally reduced to 34, most of which were sold or traded, to my profound surprise.

This was on the 15th of January (1941) and with its publication the entire family rejoiced. For two months more then, they would be spared the sight of purple, green and red-spattered bathroom walls, purple, green and red in the washbowl, and purple, green and red on every other conceivable spot I could lay my hands down.

NOTES TO YOU DEPT: What, you ask, has the title to do with the above article? The title on page 3, we mean. Well, chum, very little, as it stands. You see, this article was written back in the days when there were two fanzines in Wisconsin. Now there aren't any as far as we know. Alingbiel and his Frontiers moved to Chicago; Centaur bit the dust.

We thought the article worth publishing however, and after cutting like hell ... pardon-- after some judicious editing, whipped it into form as you see above. We unblushingly admit that most of the material submitted to, but not quite up to the standard of, Le Zombie, will find its way into these pages. Why not? These fans want to be published as well as you, and they must learn their trade somewhere. Too, it will serve as a partial means of entree if the fan wants to join the FAPA. You'd hardly call it space wasted ... ghod no, not in the FAPA!

Someone might tell Art Joquel that we are sitting anxiously around waiting the publication of his various fanzines. We haven't seen a FMZ Digest in a coons age; and we have begun to wonder if that magazine containing those ten or twelve chain letters ever will appear!

We note that Joe Gilbert has taken up our idea about a fanzine catering to the fan editor and publisher. Come to think of it, the number of titles accredited to the Columbia Camp sounds like a registry of ships sailing the Atlantic. What in the name of Loki are they going to do with all those fanzines they've announced or started? Oh well, we should worry about someone else's spilled mimeo ink.

Question: Will "the war" and the resultant economies make inroads upon fanzine production, in and out of the FAPA?