SHANGRI-LA

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In A E VAN VOGT

RAY BRADBURY

THIS L MAJOR REYNOLDS

ISSUE

CHAS SCHNEEMAN

SHANGRI-LA is the official publicstion of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society. It is bi-monthly. 10¢ a copy; 3 for 25¢; and 12 for $1.00. We trade fanzines. Letters of comment very welcome. Address of the editor is: JEAN COX, 628 S. BIXEL STREET, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA. Do not use club address for mail--but it's still 637½ S. Bixel Street, L.A. 14, Calif. Subscribe now.

CONFERENCE EDITION

EDITORIAL:

"IS THERE A FAN IN THE HOUSE?"

For years, whenever any non-fantasy fan has asked me what we do in this society, I've always replied: "It's an amateur journalism club." That reply has always seemed simpler and easier than any other; how can one in the course of a few minutes explain the vast ramifications of science fiction and fantasy and the appreciation of it? "Amateur journalism--" usually satisfies the inquirer and carries no connotations of insanity. Now I find that I'm justified. At least ten of the dozen members who form the core of the club are concerned in some way with writing. Of late, the club has been more of a would-be writers' gathering than a social appreciation of fantasy.

Did I say "would-be"? Well, that's only partially true. Even forgetting such regular attendees as A.E. van Vogt, E. Mayne Hull and L. Ron Hubbard, several of the members are writers in their own right. E. Everett Evans has recently had more "luck" than any of the other local fans. We learned just a couple of days ago that his short-short, "Guaranteed", which was so popular when it appeared in STARTLING a while back, is to be included in a new science fiction anthology soon to appear. Furthermore, he has sold several stories to WEIRD TALES, whose editor thinks he's a penname for Ray Bradbury. Another of our members, William Blackbeard, who has written for WEIRD TALES, is connected with radio writing. And still another, L. Major Reynolds (whose excellent short-short, "Lemon Cream Pie", appears in this issue) is coming back into the writing fold after a long absence. Mr. Reynolds had two stories published in the SATURDAY EVENING POST quite a while ago. Louis Lovelace (such pseudonymous-sounding names!) is one of the seven wonders of the club--he types his manuscripts with even margins on both sides, without leaving spaces in the line. Dale Hart, former editor of this publication, is dropping out of fandom, for one thing, to help further his literary ambitions. But he's prostituted himself--he's going to write mysteries and westerns.

One would ordinarily think that Forrest J Ackerman (of the ACKERMAN AUTHORS' AGENCY) would be in the height of his glory--and, in a way he is. As the agent for nearly everyone he holds nearly everyone under his thumb. But, then again, he now finds it impossible to distinguish his social life from his business life. And he has estimated that if he sold every piece of fiction produced by the club, it would fill all the magazines leaving no room for the van Vogts and the Hubbards. (That earthquake that just passed was van Vogt and Hubbard shaking in their boots.) But Everett has pointed out that over 150 fans have become writers, editors and artists in the fantasy fields.

There is a little undercurrent of rivalry running through the club, of course, and this has expressed itself in Eph Koenigsberg's proposal that we have a sweepstakes to see who makes the most money off of writing in one year. (Since that was passed, Eph has become a paragon of journalistic energy. I suspected he had an ulterior motive.) THE END.

DYNAMIC GENERAL SEMANTICS
BY A E VAN VOGT PART 1

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is an abstract of a speech made by Mr. van Vogt before the Pasadena Chapter of General Semantics, June 25, 1948. This speech was highly impromptu in nature as van Vogt had had no time for preparation, and it was made virtually without notes. As it, and its ramifications, took about three and a half hours, this was quite an accomplishment. (More so, since van Vogt, unlike most authors, is not a voluble speaker.) This article is composed of notes taken by Kenneth Bonnell, Secretary of the LASFS, and Leland Supiro. If, for any reason, the presentation of argument seems inadequate, it is not necessarily Mr. van Vogt's fault.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I was one of those people who, before reading Science And Sanity said, "I think---", "I believe---", "It is my opinion---", "It seems to me---", to the great disturbance of my family and friends. They said: "Be positive, or you won't achieve." I've gotten to agree; it doesn't pay to say, "It might be the best." You have to say, "It is the best." In writing, you can't use "seems", you have to use "is".

There is in most people a conflict between the attitudes of positivity and uncertainty. They acquire this conflict early in life and they resolve it usually in one way: By repressing the uncertainty, by demonstrating only the positiveness. The used car dealer has to look his customer in the eye and say, "This is a wonderful car. It runs like new." He doesn't mention the sawdust in the differential. And this man is mature in his own opinion. He ministers his business with skill, and he feels that this adjustment is the adjustment. People do this everyday and are admired for it.

There is a great deal to say for this method: The world at present and in the past has been run by positive people. These "thalamic people" of the world have left their impress upon history--like juggernauts they have swept the uncertain from before them and demolished their enemies.

But positivism contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction and the destruction of the culture of which it is an expression. The positivist is naively unaware of the nature of his own impulses, of his own conflicts, of his own potentialities.

Such is not so of those methods developed by the newer branches of the sciences of psychiatry, psychology, philosophy, and cultural anthropology. The underlying doctrines of general semantics are founded upon --not uncertainty-- but sort of a negative certainty; at least, it is certain that nothing is cer-

tain. But such is an over-simplification. It is enough to say that as the individual begins to learn and acquire those techniques, he finds himself more able to cope with those forces, both internal and external, which threaten his happiness.

General semantics can sweep aside many of the false notions that hold sway in the world today. The problem is, how to make people become aware of those methods. Now, for the first time in the history of our civilization we have the facilities with which to educate people extensively. But the slow process of education is not our answer; there is not time. We have a deadline.

Then, how? I have tried many times to answer the question.

Language In Action was my first book in general semantics. I found it inadequate; it made little impression upon me. Like many other people who come across null-A, I felt I knew it already. I felt that it was composed of platitudes and elementary things. "Plain talk" books like Language In Action is not the answer, I fear. My next book was Science and Sanity, which was a milestone in my life. It had made an intellectual conquest, and has remained with me ever since. My doubts were intellectually resolved; it did away with the conflict between positivism and uncertainty within me.

However, such books as SAS do not present a solution to the problem of how to introduce null-A to the layman. I've loaned and given the book to others, but they refused to read it. They "wanted to read it, but didn't have the time." So I realized that this wasn't the best book, after all. Gradually, I stopped mentioning general semantics and ceased bringing it up in discussions. This was something new; people had signal-reactions against it. The problem was still there.

An insight into the problem was contained in The Education Of T. C. Mits, a little book on mathematics, by Lillian R. and Hugh Gray Lieber. I was impressed with their descriptions of the levels by which knowledge is projected to the mass of the people: The top level is that of pure science; in this lofty realm dwell men of Einsteinian stature who speculate on the nature of things mathematical and theoretical. They are not spreaders of knowledge. The level just below them is occupied by those intelligent men who apply the discoveries of their neighbors upstairs to the fields of physics, chemistry, biology, et cetera. The level below them is that of the technical engineer, who is applying the results of the work of the people in the level just above him; he usually knows very little of the top level. The floor of the level below him is cluttered up with scientific junk--radios, television sets, automobiles, etc.--placed there by the mechanics. There is still a level below that: The level of the great mass of common people who are often not aware of the inner workings of even such things as automobiles and radios.

This leveling stuff is important: Gradually, as you talk with people, you find that knowledge can't be pulled down from

one level to another. You have to raise them up to the proper level--and that is exceedingly difficult. Nevertheless, I was determined to teach general semantics in some manner.

I read Science And Sanity early in the 1940s; it was quite a while later that I tried to solve the problem by writing World Of A . The story illustrated basic premises of general semantics, but I coined my own phrases in the story. I didn't want to give the reader the impression I was propagandizing so I refrained from mentioning Science And Sanity. There was a boom in the sales of Science And Sanity during the months of August, September and October, however.

But it, too, I found, was not the answer; such an undertaking was too intricate.

At the time I was trying to solve the problem, the problem was beginning to solve itself.

In 1945, during the last year of World War I, Phase II, when the African Front was opened, it was discovered that 17% of the personnel losses were due to the Germans and the Italians and another 17% to "battle fatigue". To put it another way: Nervous breakdowns were putting out of action as many men as the combined technological warfare of the German and Italian armies. This was a situation much deplore but one they were unable to cope with due to the limited number of psychiatrists. Or so they felt.

However, when the Normandie Front was opened, lt. Col. Douglas M. Kelley, M.D., obtained permission from Headquarters to try an experiment with 7,000 men. 7,000 men--just like that! This experiment consisted of an establishment of a series of "group psychotherapies", which employed methods borrowed from general semantics. These "group psychotherapies" employed such devices as non-identity, consciousness-of-abstracting, optimum tonacity, and the cortico-thalamic pause. These methods--especially the last named--were shown to be highly effective in the prevention of overwhelming fright, the symptom that usually proceeds fatigue.

The 17% of the losses due to fatigue dropped to 2%--demonstrating the important nature of such advances in methods of training our nervous systems.

Due to the success of this experiment, the government has instituted into the United States Navy a more extensive training program in general smenatics under the command of Lt. Com. Saunders. Other experiments have been started in other brances of the government as, for example, the Department of Agriculture. This department proved by their experiment that a large group of people trained in techniques of general semantics can reach a one hundred percent extensional agreement on even such controversial subjects as politics, economics, and legal proceedure.

(Continued on page 19.)

LEMON CREAM PIE

By L. MAJOR REYNOLDS

The small metallic-skinned animal stood facing a host of his own kind. His wee paws were upraised in supplication. Each tiny head in the multitude was bowed in prayer.

"Almighty ones, why have you forsaken us? We have done our duties as your teachings tell us we must. Yet for many moons we have hungered. No more do you send us the masses of rock containing the metal on which we live. No more do we hear the thundering noise, as they fall from the heavens. If we have offended thee, we are willing to atone in any manner acceptable in thy sight. Help us our Lords, for we hunger."

For a moment the silence held, and then the creatures turned, and, seeking their homes, vanished.

"I don't care what you say. We are not going to land near that city." Syd Holmes had his temper going full blast. "We'll park old Betsy down there by the cliffs where she'll be safe. It won't hurt you guys to do a little hoofing, after riding all the distance we did. We're not going to take chances with the ship."

"Syd is right. We don't have any idea of who or what is in that city. Why take chances with old Betsy?"

"Thanks, Ed. I knew I could count on you to help poke some sense into this bird-brain."

The long metal cylinder swung about, an the tail atomic blasts let her down smoothly toward the sands below. A touch of the bow rockets set her level, and she lit easily.

"Shake it up, guys. Get the lead out. We still have eight hours of daylight to do some prowling in. Let's go see what lives in that city we saw."

The three set off up the cliff, following a faint path that seemed to lead in the direction of the city.

For long minutes the silence held. Then a pair of bright eyes peered from the opening of a tunnel. Disbelief, wonder and awe chased themselves across the tiny face. A few hesitant steps into the open brought him to the side of the vast expanse of metal.

Never before had their Gods answered his prayers quite so quickly. Never before had they sent anything but masses of rock in which were embedded the bits of metal so important for food.

Maybe it was a dream. He sidled forward, and took a nibble out of a projecting fin. He chewed doubtfully, and then with

confidence. It was food, but in a different form than he had ever seen. No labor to this; it was a feast for the taking.

He hurried back to the tunnel, and started a peculiar vibration that summoned his people. The message read: "The Gods have answered our prayers. There is food for all."

The tiny creatures swarmed over the ship. Gaunt and hungry as they were, none tried to crowd the others. The Gods had furnished the food, and it ill behooved them to quarrel over anything so provided.

The outer hull had vanished when, suddenly, they left the ship in a body. One came to the leader.

"Oh, Margoon, we sense within this rock vast quantities of the forbidden metal. What shall we do?"

Margoon examined the shell carefully, then made his decision. "Leave it as it is. Merely take the food from around it. The Gods send it often, as a temptation, but it is never to be eaten. We must abide by the will of the Gods."

Slowly the outlines of what was left of the ship disappeared. Long lines of the tiny creatures carried the precious food to the storerooms. Supplies for many years to come. Never again would hunger strike the colony.

When the last of the metal was stored away, Margoon summoned all of them to him. Again the mutitude of tiny heads were bowed in prayer.

"Almighty Ones, we are a very humble people. Lo, we had doubted you, because of hunger. Yet you, in your mercy, sent quantities of food, the likes of which we have never seen before. Food for generations to come. We have left untasted the forbidden metal, as you would have us do. We do not knowingly break the laws that you have laid down for us. We will make many sacrifices to you in the times to come. Never again will we know doubt of you, our most generous of Gods."

The assembled populace turned quietly to their tunnels. Fat tummies were filled to popping.

"Of all the screwball places, that city took the cake." Ed Blake was peeved and didn't care who knew it. "We wasted an entire day on the thing and got nothing for our work. Somebody must have cleaned it out before we got there. Syd, isn't there a bit of metal on this whole planet?"

"Don't worry, Ed. There's some reason we haven't found it yet. After all, this is a good-sized world, and there must be a lot of cities we can explore. Don't give up so easily."

"I'm not giving up. I'm just puzzled. Something is screwy here, and I want to know what it is."

Bill Harden's voice broke in, "Ed, for Pete's sake, quit chewing on that hunk of wall. It might be poison."

"Don't taste like any poison I ever tried. Reminds me of some candy we used to have when I was a kid. Here's a place I broke off of a door. Have a bit, and see if it don't taste something like hardtack."

"So help me, Ed, you eat everything you get your paws on." Syd stopped, and looked around. "Here's the path that leads to where we left Betsy."

As they neared the spot where they had left the ship, Ed remarked, "Funny we can't see Betsy. We must have parked her closer to the cliff than I thought."

Reaching the bottom, they turned, and stopped dead in their tracks. On their untouched standards stood seven gleaming cylinders of atomic fuel.

"What in the name of the holy Gehenna!" Syd's voice broke. "Where in the hell is our ship?"

Ed's voice was choked. "Look at the food supplies. Everything is loose on the sand. All the cans are gone. It's nothing but garbage. We can't eat that."

"Stop thinking of that blasted stomach of yours, Ed. This really puts us behind the eight ball. What do you suppose happened, Syd?"

"You've got me. Look at the edges of the standards. They look like they have been chewed."

Ed Blake was trying to sort out the pile of provisions. "This stuff can't be used. See, it has a sort of mold on it. What are we going to do?"

"Ed", Syd Holme's voice quavered, "Let's have a bite of that wall you were chewing on. From the looks of things, somebody ate our ship. It will be six months before anybody comes to rescue us, so, if we want to live, we'll haveto eat their city!"

The End!

Eph Koenigsberg says, "They might as well look unsullied!"

And adds: "Fans with large collections, most of which have become tarnished, might take this tip: Get a sheet of 4-0 sandpaper and sand down the edges of the pages. Do this gently, and keep the pages firmly together during the process. Keep the covers out of the way. When through, the book will look clean and new, and will not be harmed in any way. Cheap process, too."

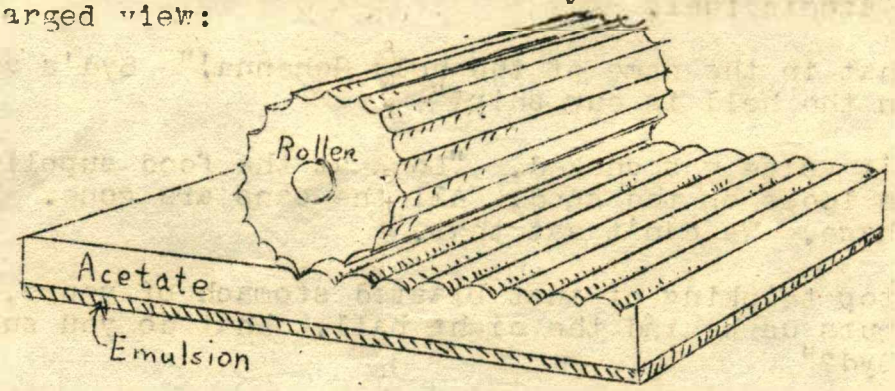
TRI-VISION CAMERA

° CHARLES ° SCHNEEMAN

The latest development in stereoscopic photography was recently announced by the Science News Letter. Working under the auspices of the U. S. Navy at the Naval Photographic center at Anacostia, D. C., Doughlas F. Winnek of Mt. Vernon, N.Y., developed the system known as "Tri-vision."

In stereoscopic photography the problem is to present the left eye view to the left eye, and the right eye view to the right eye but to prevent either from seeing both. This has been achieved in the past by superimposing the views on a screen or on film and filtering the images with colored or polarized viewers, or by viewing the separate pictures in a steroscope which makes the two appear to be in the same spot by means of prisms. This you may remember as the old parlor variety.

The new system requires that the film be passed through a roller which embosses the side of the film away from the emulsion with almost invisible parallel vertical cylindrical lenses, as shown in enlarged view:



The camera lens is seven inches in diameter so as to cover the span of the average pair of eyes. The light reaching the film is focused by the lenses on the film to very thin lines which when viewed are magnified so as to fill the width of the lenses, like the fluid in a thermometer is magnified by the glass. As each eye sees a different image magnified to fill the picture, you see around the objects in the picture. Magazine covers, illustrations, and car cards can use this by printing the image, even in color, then spraying the picture with clear acetate as varnish and then embossing the acetate with a grooved roller to match those on the film. However, to be that realistic, three dimensional subject must be used and the medium must be photography.

As many as thirty exposures can be made in succession on one piece of film and if the subject should move during the exposures the audience can see the movement as they pass the picture.

The navy's chief interest in the process was to develope a better visual aid for the navy's education program. The writer thinks a two-lens camera should be superior to the single lens because then the pictures would be "two-eyed" instead of many eyed. THE END.

THE MARKET IS NOT THE STORY

Reprinted through the courtesy of WRITERS' MARKETS & METHODS

An interview with Ray Bradbury by R. Walton Willems

In the past six years Ray Bradbury's stories have appeared in Harper's, The New Yorker, Mademoiselle, Collier's, The American Mercury, Charm, and some fifteen pulp magazines. Some of these stories were chosen for the "Best American Short Stories," 1946 and 1948 editions, and for the "O Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories of 1947." Some of his radio plays have been presented by Suspense, while his script for World Security Workshop recieved a Dodd Mead Award and will appear in "Best One Act Plays of 1947." Many of his short stories may be found in Arkham House's current "Dark Carnival."

Bradbury was born in Waukegan, Illinois, in 1920, and has been living in Los Angeles since 1934.

Ray Bradbury started writing when he was 12. The stories were sequels to Tarzan--ones he couldn't afford to buy. He spent the next nine years learning how to reach a larger audience.

Bradbury, today, still writes stories he would want to read. He doesn't write for money market, for certain magazines, nor for a chosen audience. He writes the best story he can to sell where it may. Most of his stories are on the fantasy side.

"Most selling writers could produce a story of any type," Bradbury says, "but the author who prefers westerns, for instance, can write fine ones with a good deal of sincerity in them. This is a feeling he could not give a type of story he didn't like. The sincerity extends to the reader and improves the story immeasurably.

"Which doesn't mean there is anything wrong with writing for money, for those who prefer to do so. The money-writer is writing for a purpose and he's in some ways on sounder footing than many a writer who wouldn't think of writing for money. He knows what his objective is."

Bradbury believes the writer must know his objective, must know why he is writing. If it's money he wants, and only money, he should admit this to himself and go about finding ways to make it. But, if, like Bradbury, once considers artistic worth and reputation above all, then this, too, should be admitted and said author should resign himself to little money but great returns in reputation until his name is established, whereupon the money will begin appearing as reward for honest work well done. A goal to reach will bring out individuality and style that would not develop in a writer trying to fit first one, and then another, market.

He's got reasons for thinking writers shouldn't study markets too intensely.

"The writer who slants his material is striving to copy something. He should develop his own product, should know what it is, and should have some idea of where to sell. But he shouldn't be writing the typical X Magazine story. The editor can get that from his regular writers."

Not slanting has shown results. A science-fiction story Bradbury wrote, expecting it to land in a pulp, hit a top Canadian publication at twenty times the pulp price. Reason: He hadn't written down.

"Know what you have to offer. If you don't think it good don't submit it. If you think it your best don't be afraid of any market."

Bradbury learned courage in submissions the hard way. Several stories were on file for three years before he nerved himself to submit them. One, a psychological study of a neurotic boy with a Christ complex, finally went, and was sold, to Charm. Hardly a likely market. A vampire story went to Harper's and stayed there! Another vampire story sold to Mademoiselle. They were good enough to overcome editorial reluctance to stories so far afield. The vampire story was so unsuitable to Mademoiselle that the editor changed to a vampire issue to suit the story!

Again: "I See You Never" was in file for two years before submission. The New Yorker used it, and, a few weeks ago, it won a place in "The Best American Short Stories: 1948."

Readers have found a Bradbury story doesn't change quality according to the magazine. The editor knows it is the best Bradbury can do regardless of rates. Giving only of the best is the surest way, Bradbury feels, for an author to hope to please both editors and readers.

"I don't know what a typical Bradbury story is," he admits, "I hope the one I write tomorrow is better than the one I write today, of course, because I expect the one today to teach me something more about writing.

"My stories are imaginative because that's my field. Sincerity is important. It's hard to make the reader feel something the author doesn't...No, I never write down, and I'm not ashamed of anything I turn out. I make it my best work...I don't use pseudonyms, but sometimes the editors will insist upon one."

Bradbury reads literature as an aid to writing. "This might sound strange for a writer whose work has gone mostly to the pulps. Yet, the masters of literature were, first, masters of telling a story well, and the writer can learn from them. The writer should do his best for the story, not the market. His best is to provide entertainment to serve the purpose of the reader. If the writer has a message it must be secondary.

"The writer should strive for a well-paced story, written as well as he can handle it. The writer's vocabulary need not be extensive--he shouldn't throw unusual words at the reader--but I do believe in using the right word. The read should be given something more than the basic meaning by the use of words that are dynamic and colorful, that provide pictures for the reader.

"Every writer must be his character. Describe the character's reactions, feelings, sensations--what he smells, and whether, for instance, he feels extreme heat or cold. This brings the reader closer to the character. This must be done in moderation, though. The character's immediate circumstance must be kept in mind and what he is likely to notice taken into consideration.

"I try to enable the reader to see. Ray Bradbury should never come between reader and story. I want the reader to be there. The writer's personality or wit shouldn't come into the narration of the story. Flavor, color, humor or slang should come through the actions and dialogue of the characters, not from intruding asides from the author."

Bradbury finds stories grow best from characters and ideas. The writer who works with these will create many new stories for each one he writes.

"I get dry spells, of course, but I have some protection against them. I usually take three to six months to finish a story. But I'm not working on it all that time. I try to keep 28 stories in progress during one year. I carry a story forward when I feel like working on that story. When I'm not interested in it as I should be I put it away and work on something for which I can show some enthusiasm. There is always some story to fit the mood, and, of course, with so many stories going I have the backlog and the momentum to go on when ideas are scarce.

"I believe the writer should work on something, anything, to be writing. I work five to eight hours a day, at least five days a week."

What many writers would consider a finished story often goes back in file for possible later revision.

"I get the most effective final copy when I'm not too objective about the first draft. I get words down so the idea is there, and the correct mood and tension. Revision is largely a matter of cutting to speed the pace and eliminate wordage that might be more important to the author than the reader. Being too objective and critical, too analytical on the first draft sometimes freezes a writer. The writing doesn't come naturally, but is stiff and awkward--self-conscious."

Bradbury believes two things should be avoided by the beginning writer. First is collaboration. Here each writer hopes the other will do the work. Second, stay away from first person writing. Few stories are not better in the third person, and the

writer always using the first person is developing a thought-habit hard to break.

"Writers must know human behavior. They should learn to create a character which the reader will accept as recognizably human. The writer should study people, naturally, and a few books on psychology should be read. But don't let the technical psychological terms enter your actual writing. Use your knowledge to motivate the characters, not to impress the reader."

It is always interesting to find what a writer thinks a writer is. "They certainly aren't thinkers," Bradbury said. "They're not idea men or spreaders of knowledge. Not primarily, at least. The fiction writer is, first, an emotionalist. Wherether he admits it or not. A story is not successful through logic, or beautiful thinking, or by its appeal to the intellect, though these elements must be present. It succeeds in its appeal to the readers' emotions. Many of the best beloved stories are weak in plot and idea, implausible in conception. They are great because they get under the reader's skin, causing him to react sympathetically with the characters."

Bradbury sees nothing complicated about plotting. "I put my character at a turning point in his life, where he needs something. Then he will almost automatically be in conflict with someone trying to prevent him from getting it. The story grows from the conflict.

"No, I don't know any tricks to maky writing easy. It's work and study and writing...Method? Sit down and write...In addition, I frighten the neighborhood by shouting for quiet so I can work."

Bradbury's idea file is unusual. Instead of filing ideas he writes an opening. The idea is in use, the mood is set, the story is started and ready to continue at any time.

"Some writers are sure their stories are not considered by the editors," Bradbury said. "Personally, I've submitted a lot of work to editors who'd never heard of me. Often they bought. Sometimes, stories come back with letters telling why they weren't buying."

Bradbury knows discouragement, knows it mustn't be allowed to get the writer down. He wrote for four years before submitting his first story, then submitted for five years before selling. He learned much in this time and success came because he kept going.

He's found discouragement comes even with steady sales. The writer doesn't acquire seniority and the right to an income as does the employee. Each story is a new experience in writing and selling, must stand on its own.

Bradbury believes short stories are where the fiction writer should learn his trade. The short story is easiest to sell, and principles learned here apply to all fields of writing and dramatic presentation.

JUST A MINUTE by KENNETH BONNELL

June 24th; 446th Consecutive Meeting:

Election time comes ever so often and this time was no exception. Jean Cox was elected Director, Kenneth Bonnell Secretary, and--as one might suspect--Forrest J. Ackerman Treasurer. Russ Hodgkins and Gus Willmorth won the positions of senior and junior committeemen, respectively.

E. Everett Evans brought up a subject very dear to him--that of a West Coast Conference; a one-day conventionette for 1ØØØ local fans. He explained his reasons why he thought the LASFS should sponsor one, mostly on the grounds that many of the younger Western fans were unable to attend the Eastern conventions through lack of money. He motioned that the LASFS sponsor one on Labor Day, Sept. 5th. Dave Fox seconded and the motion was passed. Everett was placed in charge of the arrangements.

July 1st; 447th Consecutive Meeting:

This meeting was held at the possible alternative clubroom at Golden State University on Santa Monica. Cox called for a discussion on whether it should be used as a regular meeting place. It had several advantages, the major one being that we could use it completely free, but several of the members felt that it was too far away for them to attend, so it was decided to keep our old one.

The speaker for the evening, one Wm. R. Boorman, Ph.d., a biologist and child psychologist, was introduced. Dr. Boorman compared the scientific knowledge of the last generation with this as exemplified by himself and his father.

July 8th; 448th Consecutive Meeting:

Jean Cox read a letter from Ray van Houten proposing that a system of awards be set up along the lines of the Motion Picture Academy for the best works in science-fiction and fantasy fields that appear during the year, both professional and amateur. The LASFS agreed that it was a good idea and that it would co-operate. Then he read a letter from Forrest and an enclosed paper-clipping. The letter contained happenings of interest going on at the Torcon and the clipping was of a newspaper coverage of the convention, entitled "Zap! Zap!", which made the fans sound like children, which of course they don't sound like.

July 15th; 449th Consecutive Meeting:

At the Griffith Planetarium, the "show" for July was "A Trip To The Moon", which several members attended; without ado, the discussion went to it. Although, it was disappointing in some respects it contained several unexpected surprises. For example: The operator of the projector "got off course" and couldn't locate the Earth when we were halfway to the moon. Frantically, he tried to find it, wheeling us swiftly across interplanetary space in search

of our home. As the rest of the audience tittered embarrassedly, the science-fiction fans sat shivering with fearful excitement at this glimpse of things to come, when at some future date, other travelers would be lost in the remote vastnesses of interplanetary space. At last, the aged astronomer managed to locate the sun; a sharp, bright ball that flamed brilliantly through the control turret of our spaceship. After due diligence, we located Earth.

This same astronomer had some troubles of less manual nature. He is the author of a couple of articles on interplanetary travel which appeared in the Los Angeles Times in 1946, but he is guilty of such as the following: "It would be impossible to reach Venus with any type of rocket now known. For Venus is a hundred times as far away as the moon--that means that it would take a hundred times as much fuel to get there and that means that the ship would have to be a hundred times larger which means, in turn, it would take a hundred times more fuel and thus would have to be a hundred times larger and thus a hundred times more fuel--" Ad infinitum, ad nauseum.

July 22nd: 450th Consecutive Meeting:

Our guest speaker this evening was none other than E. Everett Evans, newly returned from the Torcon. He spoke about the convention, describing it at some length. He told about the speakers and what they spoke, about the attendees and smoke-filled rooms. He said it was the best convention he'd seen, except for the Philcon. It bettered the Pacificon and the Denvention.

July 29th: 451st Consecutive Meeting:

Another homecoming: This time our golden-haired boy, Forrest Ackerman, whom everyone owes money. Since we had already been treated to a lengthy discussion of the convention by Evans, he glossed over it very briefly except to say that he wasn't as enthusiastic about it as Everett, although he enjoyed it very much. The chief drawback, he confided, was the noticeable lack of professionals, who usually make or break a convention. However, our agent didn't spend all his time at the convention; he went and bearded the editorial lions in their dens in order to sell more stories.

He had one rather amusing experience in Canada. He visited a publishing house in order to obtain some one-shot science-fiction and weird tales magazines put out by it, all displaying covers a la Planet. He walked into the editorial office and told them that he was interested in buying some science fiction. The owner of the place came out from in back and said, "Science-fiction fan, huh? Would you by any chance like to buy some old Lovecraft books I have--The Outsider--for a dollar apiece?"

This is the anti-climax: The fellow was just kidding.

Anyway, Forrest didn't come away empty handed. The gentleman told him that his one-shots had been so successful that he was planning to publish a national science-fiction periodical in the near future. Everett the week before had revealed that "in the next three months there will possibly be a new science-fiction magazine on the stands put out by Robert N. Webster of the CLARK

PUBLISHING COMPANY. This magazine will be semi-slick and will have color illustrations on the interior. Things seem to be looking up...

August 5th; 452nd Consecutive Meeting:

News has come to the club that the rent might be boosted to fifty bucks. Walt Daugherty, whom we share the clubroom with, would pay part of this, but we'd still not be able to meet our share. It was decided, therefore, that we look for a new clubroom. Director Cox appointed several committees-of-one to look for other places.

Our speaker this meeting was Mark Blanck, psycho-dramatist and student of general semantics, who spoke on a subject bearing the title, "How Do You Know You're Sane?" It wasn't specifically concerned with that 'problem', however, but dealt with the history of ideas concerning sanity.

August 12th; 453rd Consecutive Meeting:

Everett announced that Eric Temple Bell--the John Taine of Science Fiction--would be a principle speaker at the forthcoming West Coast Conference. He also told us that Taine was engaged in writing a science fiction mystery, "Scarlet Night."

Cox passed on the purely-inferential information that aSF would soon go back to the old 10 X 7 size. He deduced this from 3 sources: 1. There is an announcement in this issue of DOC SAVAGE that it is going back to the large size next issue. 2. The Street and Smith pulp magazines have always been the same size except for a brief period in 1942-3. 3. Campbell remarked in the May issue that big changes were planned for the magazine. No bets.

Our visitor, Ray Bradbury, disclaimed credit for the play that was put on over Suspense two weeks back. He said that he had worked two weeks to get them to put his name at the beginning of the program rather than tacking it onto the end and then all they did was use his title and two lines of dialogue. He was burned up. (They paid him $300!) Henry Kuttener intuitively recognized the fact that it wasn't his and wrote him about it, for which he commended Hank. Robert Bloch wrote him to say that he knew Ray must have written the commercials. (The commercials had kids in them.)

The End.

R.U.R. or R. U. ain't my baby?

Time reveals that in Milwaukee Arthur Brach complained bitterly that an 800-pound robot he was repairing had struck him on the head. Just a glimpse of things to come?

Another oddity:

We learned recently that Agent Ackerman has been spending a good many of his evenings minding the tiny several-month old daughter of Author Bryce Walton. Better read the fine print in those contracts next time, Forrest.

SHANGRI-LETTERS

Pix by Rotsler

Cracks by Gus

Ed Cox of Lubec, Maine sez:-

...."The Wind is Blowing in My Eye" was truly one of the best pieces of fan (?) fiction I've read in a fanzine! All of the rest of the issue was quite good; especially enlightening minutes of the LASFS. In the newest Shangri-LA, liked the pic (very well drawn) of the "Weapon Shop" and the article. The minutes were again very good. Always full of info and happenings. Twas very funny about poor van Vogt and A....B, A....B!.....

Forry Ackerman's pages were very interesting and revealing. I never knew that he and CLMoore had written a story together! I thought that the only story he'd sold was the one in TWS. Donkeys to baldpate one or something like.

TRITON #2 will be out in October sometime. We also hope it will be improved in both format and material. Also, a companion-zine to TRITON, OPEN STFIRE, will accompany it. Both free, but exchanges are welcome if you want. //Tho 4e has had many stories printed, very few have defiled the name of FORREST J ACKERMAN -- something that enhances the name far more than the professional work.//

Leslie Hudson, roseland, virginia, states:-

Best thing in the mag this time was Dr. Keller's article "Glass Houses." I don't usually care for his work but I liked this very much.

The real reason I buy this zine is because of the minutes of the LASFS meetings. As Joe Diner says, they often carry news ahead of other sources. //Ah, pshaw!//

Lee Budoff, exLASFS miss and artrix, confides from Phoenix, Arizona:-

Guess who is my nicest friend here in Phoenix? Forrie said that Raymond N. Jones lives here so I looked him up in the phone book and sure enough, I found him. He and his wife are the sweetest, nicest people, just like Van and Wayne, only a trifle more extroversial. Ray works at the weather bureau and raises horrid, smelly chickens and a brood of cute kids. His wife is lovely, and if she weren't blond and tall, I'd swear she looked like Wayne. Campbell sent them a clipping from the NY Times which is all about the Russian reaction to Renaissance! Poor Ray, if the Russians ever land here he'll be the first to go. According to the little dears, his story stank of the usual "Decadent Democracy."

Rick Sneary P/C's from South Gate in '58:*

Am all but on my way to my own personal bomb-dodgers retreat for 4th-night. Sorry to see you (Hart) go as ed of Shaggy. Cox might be good. (Lots of Coxs, aren't there?) I'd try for the job, if (a) I had time; (b) I was a member; (c) I could spell. I feel quite attached to Shaggy, it being my first zine, and first to carry a Sneary letter.

Keller outstanding. Reads like a medical paper, yet fully understandable and interesting. Cox next....Tho a little club business might be worked in, he has the minutes up to a high point in enjoyable reading.

Scoles....I had a distant cousin working out there. Navy Lt.

Confab great news. Will be there with rockets firing. Hope to be bringing Outsiders Society en mass.....See you there.

Len Moffatt, another Outsider, from Bell Gardens (Tha's across a river or a road or an alley from Southgate, also P/C's:-

.....

SHANGRI-LA #7 was a fairly well-balanced issue. Just enough "light" stuff (Just a Minute, Letters, etc) to balance the "heavy" stuff---both "light" and "heavy" stuff was most interesting to read. Results, then, of your "experiment":- Success. So much for one fan's opinion. Sorry to hear you're leaving fandom (DH, not S-L) but glad to hear you'll return later to "indulge in limited activity". Good luck on your story writing! Eagerly await more news on the Sept 5th confab; certainly hope to be there. Refering again to S-L, one complaint: not enough artwork; you know, pix and stuff. But the cover was "different" (for a fanmag cover) and the egg-hatching wench well placed---right over Tucker's letter.....

Allen Class, one time winner of the Traveler's Award at the Denvention, dropped a letter to Dale Hart (which he can't find) and a card from Chicago:-

Hi, Dale - Remember this town? Have been here for a week and will be for another. Here for 2 weeks familiarization with radio equipment at De Forest's Training, Inc. Got your address from Sept Startling so thought I'd drop you a line. Be back home next week. // From Classes letter, Hart reports that Class, who dropped activity after the Denvention, is married, happy, and still reads the Only True Literature. Jus' thot you'd like to know.//

Russell Harold Woodman, Portland, Maine, gibbers:-

Dear Sign of the Burning Hart, I enclose half a buck in the ungodly and terrifying shape of a money order for six copies. I am the publisher of TRITON, which came your way not long ago unless Uncle Sam's broken down Postal Dept failed again.....I like gals named Genevieve or Dale, spit through my teeth, and never kill a bird in a bush when I can find one in a nest.

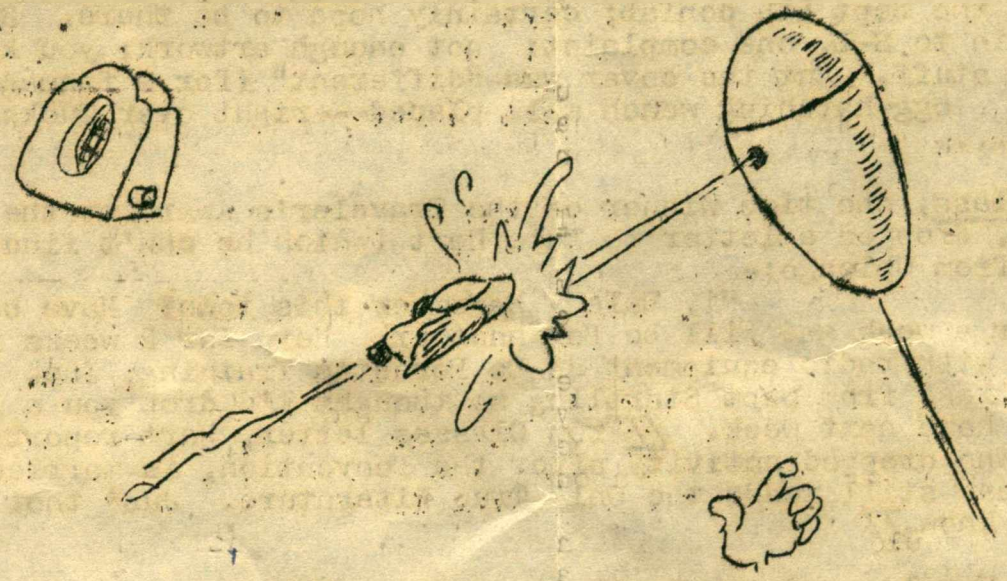
Norman T. Stanley, from Rockland, Maine, (so far as this here letter section is concerned, if your not from Maine or South Gate, you've had it) raises a chiding figure at our unworthy exsecretary:-

.....Oh, yes, and ref. SLa #7 p15, "Richard Farnsworth" is not the president of the American Rocket Society; he's a character which De Camp used to use...pardon me, still does use (see March 1948 aSF)...for assorted fictional purposes. R. L. Farnsworth (R. is for Robert, I believe), author of the rocket article in question, is boss man of the U.S. Rocket Society, and the outfit has definitely nothing to do with the ARS.

Kris Neville, Santa Monica, Calif, which is just across town from South Gate, and who is a boon drinking companion who doesn't have to be carried away from the table more than once or twice a week, drops a hint:-

....read this month's Harper's [July, I think] I thought this article classic. Much better than Lovecraft, say. Thought, too, that you might like to look at it. Best example of weird writing I've seen in hell knows how long -- although not the WT type.

[I, gus willmorth, find myself faced with a hell of a lot of space right here....



which should be filled with letters, but since I cut all the vilely commercial parts out of the letters there wasn't enough to fill this space. But if you think that I'm going to waste my time writing anything for this mag, you're crazy.....at least not while I got all these pretty Rotsler pen scribbles. gw]

DYNAMIC GENERAL SEMANTICS: (Continued from page 5.)

It is fairly evident that from this we can predict the continued employment of these methods in the various branches of our government.

This is the significant factor in these reports: That even though a person should use these methods for his own selfish gain, those methods in the end alter his own basic personality structure; cause him to evolve gradually to a more mature, non-egocentric human being. This is true also on the national level as well as the individual. Our robost, vigorous democracy shall gain maturity. Perhaps.

Anyway, the solution to our problems is in sight. But there are complications.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This first half was but a prelude to the second in which the major importance of Mr. van Vogt's speech was contained. His highly interesting and startling statements should interest both students of general semantics and science-fiction enthusiasts. Don't miss it.

* * * * *

INTERVIEW WITH RAY BRADBURY: (Continued from page 13.)

He admits he doesn't plan the future of a story. "Working on the story itself is enough. I complete it as best as I can. If it wins a prize award I'm happy, but a story can't be a planned prize winner..."

And when the Hollywood studios come around interested in buying stories which the writer has almost forgotten about, that just bears out Bradbury's contention that it's worthwhile to put your best in every story.

The End.

"You mean," marveled a member of the LASFS, "that under hypnotism I could turn out classic stories and poems?"

Van Vogt and Hubbard nodded their heads sagely in assent. "If you let us hypnotize you, you'll suddenly find that you can write wonderfully beautiful poetry, scintillating with the brilliant sparkle of genius," intoned Hubbard.

" 'I would find--'...," there was comprehension in the other's voice. "But they wouldn't be any good to other people!"

"Bahhh, critics!" sneered Hubbard.

--ajc

NEXT ISSUE: Interesting articles by a variety of writers--A. E. van Vogt, G. Gordon Dewey, William Blackbeard plus unusual stories and features. And attend the conference!

Don't forget

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