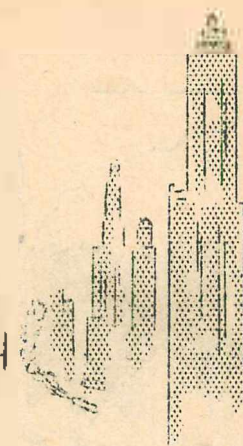


CENTAURI

NUMBER TWO.....WINTER, 1944

- TABLE OF CONTENTS -



COVERS- Front- Jack Miller Back- John Lencicki

FICTION-

Secret of Atlantis.....Duane W. Rimel.....15

ARTICLES-

The Comic Question.....Charles McNutt.....5

Fantasy in Esquire--Biblio.....William H. Evans.....9

VERSE-

Space-Man's Rendezvous.....Earle Franklin Baker.....10

O Fly With Me.....Shirley L. Chapper.....13

HUMOR-

Encyclopedia of Fandom (II).....Bob Tucker.....11

COLUMNS-

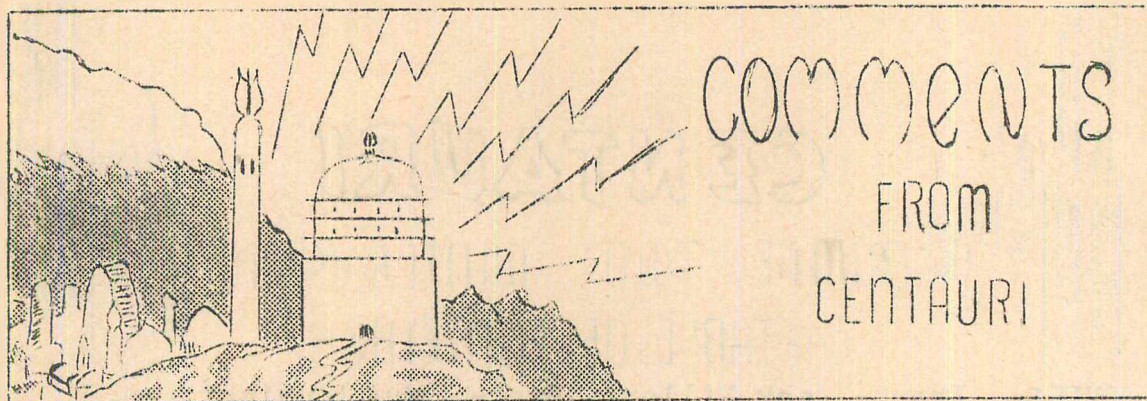
Comments From Centauri.....The Editor.....4

The Unnamed.....Harry Warner, Jr.7

Opposites---React!.....Readers and Critics.....24

INTERIOR ART by Andy Anderson

CENTAURI, issue two. Published quarterly at 515 Ocean Ave., Pismo Beach, Calif. Edited by Andy Anderson. Single copies, ten cents each. Three issues for a quarter. Subscriptions and advertisements exchanged with other fanzines. Centauri is an amateur and non-profit publication and no payment can be made other than a complimentary copy of the issue in which the author's work appears. Accepted material is subject to editorial revision if found necessary. Centauri confines itself to material dealing with science-fiction; usable material which is outside its scope will be placed with some other fanzine if the author so desires. Opinions are not necessarily those of the editor, unless signed by him. Comments on this magazine, as well as contributions of articles, fiction, verse and art are cordially invited.



--by The Editor--

Parring some sort of major catastrophe, or perhaps a combination of minor ones such as those which so inexcusably delayed this issue, the third number of Centauri shall appear early in April. As a cover for this, Ronald Clyne has done a lithograph which, incidentally, has a very interesting story behind it; Tom Daniel has sent in an article of fan interest plus, called "Fanwise"; Keith Buchanan has managed another on his ideas of the immediate future of rocketry, and both Francis Lanev and Frank Wilimczyk are reported at work on still others. There will be columns by Harry Warner and myself, of course, as well as a new one on sf movies by Charles McHutt. If those of you who read this can also write, by any strange quirk of fate, I may even be able to have a nice, huge letter section. To cap all of this off, Centauri will not be shipped folded or rolled or otherwise mangled starting with the next issue, but will come to you in flat mailing envelopes.

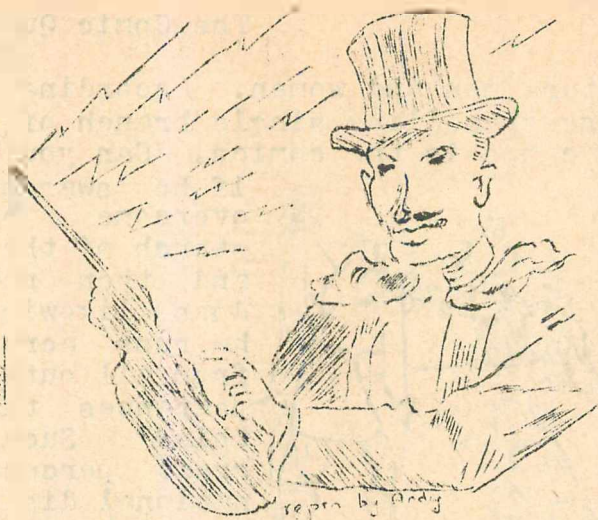
Naturally enough, things like those envelopes and lithographs cost a lot of money. I don't begrudge Centauri any of these things, but it's possible that, running short of finances, I may have to cut out some of those costly improvements and perhaps even cut the size of the magazine.

My circulation this issue numbers two hundred, but an awful lot of those are sample copies. If you are receiving one of these, or if your subscription has expired, you'll find a small gold star to the left of this. If there is one, and you want to get that super third issue I was talking about, it's quite in order to send a quarter right away. You'd be surprised how those quarters add up to form dollars and help pay for this darn magazine.

--Concluded on Page 14--

THE COMIC QUESTION

BY CHARLES McNUTT



Although this was discussed in an early issue of Raym's "Scientifun" by Len Moffat, I should like to go into science fiction and fantasy comic-strips in a bit more detail. It is a fact that the public's views on stf have been and perhaps always will be one of an extremely distasteful nature, and a great deal of this is due largely to the fact that the comic industry has monopolized on the highly profitable field of fantasy, siming, of course, their publications at the wide-eyed ten year old who in turn gobbles it down with great gusto, unwittingly crossing the comic potentes a small fortune.

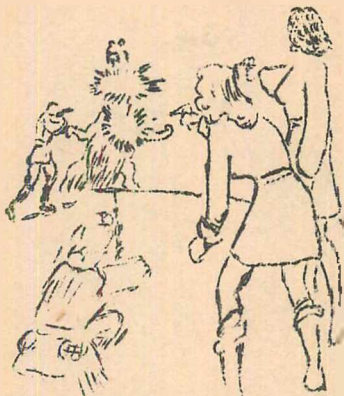
The general non-scientifictionist immediately compares an issue of "Planet Comics" with Amazing or Planet or Captain Future and, finding the covers basically alike, condemns the mag for what it supposedly was---a juvenile.

Unlike Moffat, I am not here to defend the industry of "conixia" but to hold it up as the co-conspirator toward the utter demolition of our beloved stf! While all these cartoon artists, publishers, and distributors are unaware of the great wrong they are doing, they continue to turn out a mass-production of re-hash and re-hash and then rest upon their laurels, hearing that everpleasant jingle of coin in their jeans. All this is fact, and I have proven it to myself by going out to the store and buying nine or ten of the rags after reading Moffat's article. Truthfully, nine out of nine of them are downright rotten, and were I a non-stfer, about to weigh this new mag I had discovered (astounding, perhaps) with the "funny-books" I would certainly walk away disgusted. There is only one plot to all of them; one story pattern that is followed throughout the whole nauseating yarn: Handsome hero--beautiful babe--horrible monster or race of monsters--mad scientist and rocketship, --all of which supposedly stir the youngsters' imaginations to the exploding point. If only youngsters read the stuff, it wouldn't be so bad, but that isn't the case. Strangely enough, fully half of the comic-mag public are grown-up,



The Comic Question-

mature men and women. According to the Writer's Digest, the largest selling single branch of the publishing field in army camps is the comics. Can you blame an intelligent person



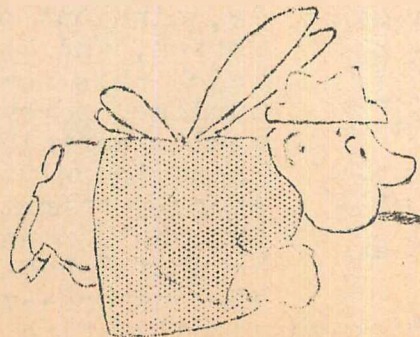
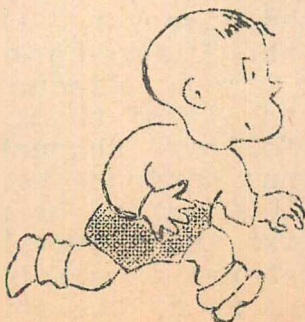
if he swaggers off, overcome by the stench of the comics and then naturally does likewise when he runs across stf. from all outward appearances the same thing? Such is a great percentage of national dislike toward "the field" and still some defend



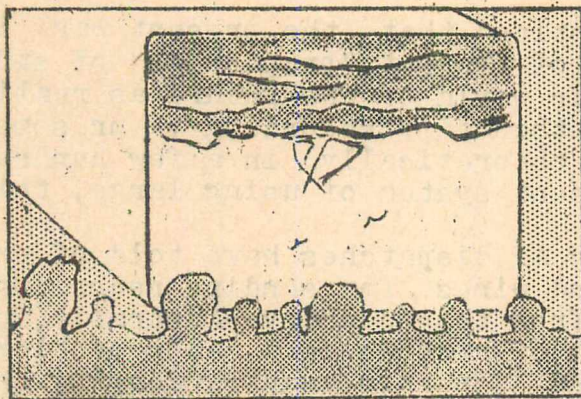
the comics that tend toward science and fantasy!

Still, the newspaper or syndicated comic strip is nearly always entertaining and intelligent. Everyone reads them, and among the few good strips that thrive, and started the fad which disintegrated so horribly are: 1. Prince Valiant, by Harold R. Foster---undoubtedly the best of them all, story and drawing both. Ron Clyne and myself had the extreme pleasure of meeting Mr. Foster once, and an autographed original hangs in both of our dens. 2. Flash Gordon, by Alex Raymond---who, Foster told us, has been attempting to quit Flash for the past two years and enter the illustrating field, but is bound by a seven year contract, thus the sudden metamorphosis, sans, the large swift brush strokes. He never did do the writing, however. 3. Brick Bradford. Its diminishing popularity has caused a great number of reprints and rather loose handling. 4. Mandrake the Magician. It still flourishes---some adventures entertaining, others not so. 5. Parnaby. An amusing new strip appearing in PM and other Eastern papers. Light fantasy of a sort, but it's not very well known yet. There are others, but they're not even worthy of mention. What say we merely end by hoping that some of those comic publishers will awaken to the fact that more grown-up appeal in their mags would do themselves, as well as us, a world of good?

Well, gotta go see what new scrape Dick Tracy's in now...So long.....



~ HARRY WARNER, JR. ~



THE UNNAMED

Once in a while, I see a fan article whose author rather violently proclaims and laments the sad fact that there are no decent scientificfictional movies to be found, when one exhausts a half-dozen or so meager examples of the genre--"Things to Come", and a few others over which most fans rave, whether they've ever seen them or not.

These fans usually ask bitterly why fandom doesn't do something about the situation, and somehow manage to get producers to come through with more movies of this sort. But no one ever does any more about it than the weather, excepting a petition that was started about eight years ago, and never even got as far as Hollywood.

The fact is, producers are afraid to screen adult stuff, just as they're afraid to screen any kind of adult entertainment, except when a book has become tremendously popular and its author demands a reasonably faithful screen version. Right or wrong, that's the way they feel about it, and I don't believe the efforts of a couple of hundred fans could get them to spend several million dollars on an epic film version of "The Skylark of Space".

But the thought occurred to me, why not go at the thing from a different angle, and get a couple of short subjects produced? I know little about the intricacies of the movie business, but I am certain there is less to be lost on shorts, and consequently they aren't quite as standardized as full length features.

My plan is this: Several West Coast fans have contact with Hollywood. With them acting as go-betweens, some of us could decide on a story we want to see filmed, arrange with the author and original publisher for screen rights, study up on writing scenarios, and turn out a product that would need only actors and cameras for completion. The ideal story for this purpose, to begin with, is "--And He Built a Crooked House." About ten or twelve minutes would suffice to tell the tale on the screen; it's funny enough to appeal to those

-THE UNNAMED-

who don't understand it; has been read by hundreds of thousands through Wollheim's PocketBOOK; offers a chance for some trick photography; and wouldn't be expensive to produce, needing only a handful of actors and one set. Is anyone willing to go to work on this, right now?

How many fans have noticed that the present war is hastening the coming of one of the pet "properties" of sf. writers who like to make their world of the future as realistic as possible? That is the "tape recording", or sometimes a wire one, that will theoretically in a few hundred years have replaced the present system of using large, thin flat disks for records.

Several times recently AP dispatches have told of experiments with such tapes and wires for sending recordings to the service men far away from this country--Australia, for instance--the sending to whom of records is a major problem, with shipping still a problem for this country despite the easing off of the submarine menace. And just the other day came word that there is a sort of tape device being used on bombing raids, to record all conversations that go on among the crew, partly in order to verify memories after the men return, and partly to provide some record of what happened in case one or more men in a plane are killed during the raid. This, according to the article, was available for an unlimited number of re-playings, and could at any time be 'wiped off', and the material used for new recordings.

It seems very probable to me that five years after the end of this war will see the end of the present sort of records. They're dreadfully hard to handle, especially in the case of the big transcriptions radio stations use, take up huge amounts of storage space, are still fragile, and very vulnerable to accidental marblings since the entire surface is exposed when they are in use. My guess is that the recordings of the future will look very much like movie film and be handled in much the same way. That way, it'll be possible to go from one recording to another without interruption, a tremendous advantage for recordings of long musical compositions or even complete plays---they can be manufactured all in one long strip, or sold in sections and easily spliced together. Whether the future recording medium proves to be wire or tape, it'll take up almost no space in comparison with present-day devices, and may be dropped with impunity.

Matter of fact, we're catching up faster to sf. during this war than we did during the entire twenty years between the end of the last one and the beginning of the present. Besides these recording techniques, rockets are coming to the fore in almost every direction except actual use for the prolonged propulsion of airships, for instance, and television at last is all set for general use, needing only the end of hostilities to come into the public domain. The sf.

FANTASY IN Esquire

a bibliography compiled by

WILLIAM H. EVANS

Editorial Note:--

This listing is, as far as we can ascertain, complete to December, 1942. If anyone can complete or add to this bibliography, their help would be sincerely appreciated, and their notes will be published in the subsequent issue.

The three columns to the right are for the volume number, date of issue and page number. An asterisk denotes an article.

The Ghost Patrol.....	Maurice Renard.....	1..Apr	34..38
Without Flowers.....	Robert Snider.....	2..Jun	34..48
The Kid Across The River.....	William McFee.....	2..Aug	34..56
Devil, George and Rosie.....	Part One.....	2..Nov	34..28
John Collier.....	Part Two.....	2..Dec	34..72
The Happy Ghosts.....	Thomas Burke.....	3..Jan	35..49
Renaissance Mecanique....	Craighton Peet.....	3..Mar	35..27
The Great Tomorrow.....	Manuel Komroff.....	3..Mar	35..61
The Dragon's Bride.....	E. D'Auxion DeRuffe,..	3..Mar	35..81
So You Won't Talk?.....	Manuel Komroff.....	3..Apr	35..27
The Perlu.....	Alvin B. Harmon.....	3..Jun	35..44
The Lonely Inn.....	Thomas Burke.....	4..Jul	35..85
The Enchanted Slippers..	Arthur Davidson Ficke..	4..Oct	35..40
Fun in the Third Dimension*	Willy Ley.....	4..Dec	35..102
The Haunted Lake.....	Patrick Alexander.....	5..Feb	36..56
A Bare Possibility.....	Walter Brooks.....	5..May	36..77
The End of Sidney Snarby.....	Hannibal Towle...6..	Jul	36..44
The Mysterious Miss Lulu.....	Hannibal Towle...6..	Aug	36..37
The Eye and the Finger.....	Donald Wandrei...6..	Dec	36..70
The Jaccoon Complex.....	J. C. Furnas.....	7..Apr	37..40
The Painted Mirror.....	Donald Wandrei...7..	May	37..50
The Romance of the Gands.....	Gerard Morris....7..	Jun	37..87
The Fight Mistresses.....	Jean Hrolde.....	8..Aug	37..48

Fantasy in Esquire

The Eerie Mr. Murphy.....	Howard Wandrei...	8..Nov	37..59
A World Can End*.....	R. R. Sullivan...	8..Dec	37..86
The Impurity of Science..srt..	Hugh Tray.....	8..Dec	37..159
Exactly Six O'Clock.....	Freeman Tuck.....	9..Jan	38..79
Uriel the Archangel-pict.....	Frank Bergman....	9..Jan	38..82
Man Who Walked Through Glass..	Nelson S. Bond..	10..Nov	38..67
It Might Happen to Anybody....	Ben Hamilton....	10..Dec	38..72
The Package Phantasy.....	Manuel Komroff..	11..Mar	39..60
Flying as a Hobby.....	Parke Cummings..	11..Apr	39..45
The Extreme Ariness of Denton Long.....			
	Percival Wilde....	11..Apr	39..54
The Garden of Femodis.....	Manuel Komroff..	11..Jun	39..66
Trouble in Hell.....	Manuel Komroff..	12..Aug	39..32
The Man Who Was Convertible..	Samuel Gratton..	12..Sep	39..33
The Pottle Party.....	John Collier.....	12..Oct	39..47
The Happy Land Without a Sky..	Manuel Komroff..	12..Oct	39..54
Germany Never Had a Chance....	George Anthell..	12..Nov	39..52
Memos in a Television Agency..	Parke Cummings..	12..Nov	39..71
Automatomania.....	Ernst Behrendt.....	12..Nov	39..87
What Life Will Be Like*.....	Bert R. White....	13..Mar	40..38
Little Miss Whisk.....	Hannibal Towle....	13..Apr	40..50
The Girl Who Wept Pearl Tears..	Manuel Komroff..	13..Jun	40..36
The Wizard of Wump.....	Wilmen Menard.....	16..Jul	41..44
The Lost Halo.....	Horatio Winslow....	16..Dec	41..51
Marionettes' Night Out.....	Louis Paul.....	16..Dec	41..83
Professor Julian's Doll.....	Louis Paul.....	17..Mar	42..28
Martians Like It Dry*...John W. Campbell, Jr...		17..Mar	42..90
The Last Year of the Great War..	Geo. Anthell..	17..Apr	42..27
It Will Grow on You.....	Donald Wandrei.....	17..Apr	42..77
The Atavism of Ralph Piskatore..	Robert J Kuhn..	18..Oct	42..53

"SPACE-MAN'S RENDEZVOUS"

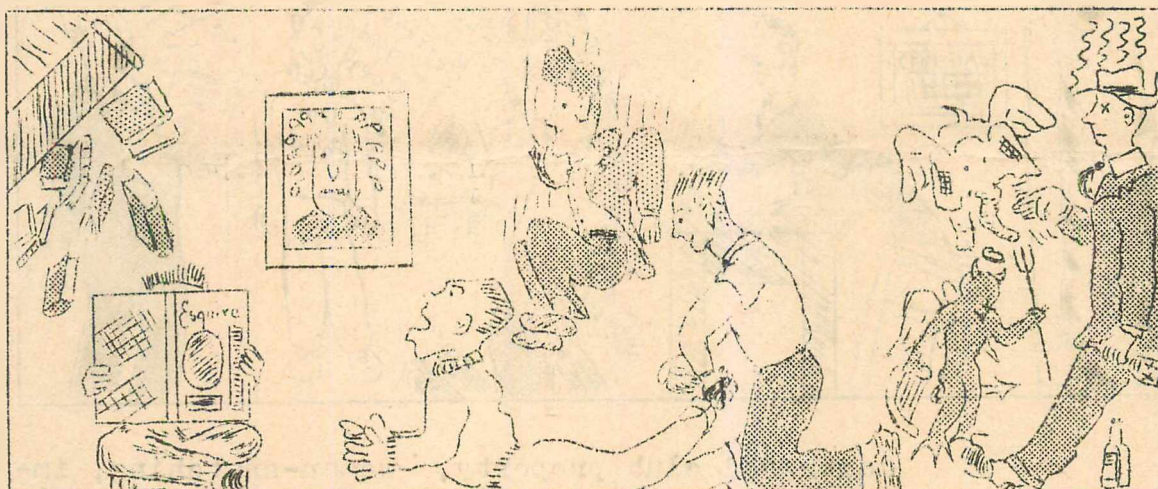
—EARLE FRANKLIN BAKER

Gay knights of the space-ways throng this street,
 Martian laughter, and the Earthmen's smile,
 Adventurers calling, strange are the faces you meet
 Where space-lanes, crossing, breed an emerald isle.
 Many are the space-songs that singe the very air
 You fight for, and always learn to know,
 Here all space-men meet, exchanging wage and share,
 While the Patrol-ships come and quickly go.

I think of all Earth's hurried, city ways
 Where throngs must move and never love the sky,
 Where strangers meet and pass, through eventless days,
 With never a rocket-blast waving a red goodbye.
 So I grow thoughtful, wishing you were free
 To walk this space-man's rendezvous with me.

PONG'S

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FANDOM



II- The Fan Club

- Fanz-- (sub species of humanity) Non-tax-paying citizens of an imaginary, Utopian world known as "science-fiction Fandom". Out of space and time.
- Fan-Editor-- (unhuman) The Devil in human form. Hated and feared alike by those mentioned above and below this. Devises inhuman tortures for contributors to foist on his readers.
- Pro-Editor-- (inhuman) God---in the agnostic and atheistic world mentioned above. A lonely soul.
- Fan Club-- (institution) General gathering place for fan, devils, fallen gods, has-been illuminarys, pok-

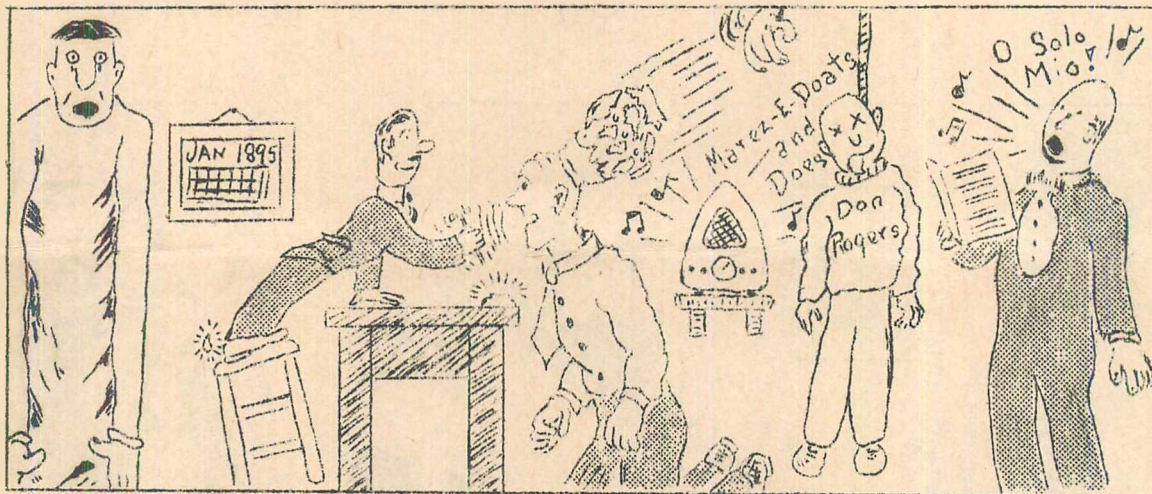
Pong's Encyclopedia of Fandom

er-players, misfits, thugs, utopian-minded citizens and other rabble-rousers.

Programme-- (intangible) A schedule of diverse activities laid out by a committee to separate the opening and ending of a club meeting, and thereafter ignored by officers and members alike.

Club Meeting--(tangible) Near-riot.

Minutes-- (archives) Fictitious record of imaginary activities of previous meeting, omitting all mention of brawls, alcoholic beverages, split skulls and broken bottles, treasury-juggling, altered records, off-color speeches, stolen or



destroyed club property, women-snatching, immoral propositions, fixed or questionable elections, drunken officers, braying asses, charges and counter-charges, inane motions, stupid resolutions, missing funds, missing officers, filthy jokes, fist-fights, editorial rivalry, manuscript-stealing, editor-baiting, blackmail, garroting, rum-potting and other run-of-the-mill activities.

Auction-- (sale) Polite form of extortion to raise spending money for treasurer. Old pictures are exchanged for large amounts of cash.

Cynic-- (human) Artist who painted picture, the auction-receipts of which drives him to the bitter

End

O fly with me through blue dew skies
where misty frogs with star stone eyes
appraise our flight

Ah! there the air is cooler still
than on the breast of a brown hill
at dim twillight

We'll bid the half-crest moon "hello"
and watch the mortals move below
on cross patch leas

We'll watch the seaweed twine with ships
and toss when oceanic lips
answer the breeze

How little earth and mortals seem
from blue dew skies where dreams undreamed
are yours and mine.

Shirley L. Chapper

-THE-UNNAMED-

-continued from page 8-

magazines may yet have to change their titles to True Story, and sell back issues as history text books, as Charlie Horn- is once predicted!

And since it's very probable that victory will be in sight by the time this sees print, let me predict here and now that the armistice and the year that follows won't make any great difference to fandom. Lots of fans, for one thing, are in the service for longer than duration plus six months; those who aren't will be released and seep back into civilian life gradually, and I suspect that at least half of them will never again fan on a large scale. The tremendous upsurge in fandom that most have been expecting, come the peaceful days once more, isn't likely to burst upon us overnight, if it ever comes.

As for the prozines, that's a matter one had better not ponder upon. When paper is once more available in unlimited quantities, and about twenty publishing houses start to find out what sort of luck they can have with a few pulp stf magazines apiece--well, it's better not to worry oneself with the seamy side of life.

COMMENTS FROM CENTAURI-

--continued from page 4--

And now, a couple of notes to you art enthusiasts and critics: First off, there will be an inclosure in the next issue of Centauri, wherein E. T. Beaumont, the artist who has been publicized much recently in FFF, will make his fan debut. The same inclosure will be in some of the other magazines, but don't take a chance---get that next issue!

The other thing you really shouldn't miss is the Wallace Smith art portfolio, recently published by Ron Clyne at 135 1/2 North Gale Drive, Beverly Hills, California. The ten drawings included in the portfolio were some of the illustrations for a very limited edition of Ben Hecht's FANTAZIUS MALLARE, published in 1922, and now extremely rare. The drawings have been expertly lithographed on very heavy, glossy stock, all suitable for framing. There is also a page of printed introductory notes, and the whole works is neatly gotten up in a substantial folder.

The bill was paid by five and ten dollar investments made by fans who have seen the drawings and know just what they are. I myself am one of the sponsors and I don't throw my money around much. The price of the portfolio is only one dollar, and Ron assures you that he will refund the money in full to any fan who dislikes the portfolio enough to return it undamaged in ten days. Good enough?

-O-O-O-

Paradox

the one-time all-time-travel fanzine, has been steadily rising in popularity, and it's no wonder, for every time it appears it has been a great improvement over preceding issues. And the seventh (Spring, 1944) issue of Paradox is no exception to this rise in quality. Out on the thirtieth of March, this 28 page issue will feature "The Crimson Key", a long story by Duane W. Rimel, "Wagner's Operas", by Harry Wanner, Jr., plus shorter articles and features by Bill Watson, Bob Tucker, Raym Washington, The Anachronist, and others, plus many distinctive drawings and headings by John Lencicki. 10¢ for single copies, three for 25¢ -- Frank Wilimczyk, Jr. 3 Lewis Street, Westfield, Mass. (copies of #6 still available)



"You're working too hard, Chet. You need a rest."

"Rhoda, two days ago I stumbled upon a great secret. I can't afford to stop now. If things turn out well, I will be famous----"

"What is it?" she inquired. Her brown, penetrating eyes made me uneasy.

"I really can't tell you yet, dear," I said. "It's too fantastic; too unbelievable. I've got to experiment some more---and be sure. If I succeed, you'll be the first to know."

"You're just being stubborn," she said, her warm smile fading. "Don't you know what week this is? We planned our vacation---together. Our wedding---our honeymoon...." Tears filled her eyes..

"Now, darling," I murmured, squeezing her hand. I kissed her. She trembled and smiled. "Only a week longer, I promise. That will be time enough. I want to---you know that, but it's work before pleasure."

She nodded and raised her lips.

Two days later---July 18th---a telegram came, from Portland. Rhoda was there; had flown down to visit her aunt, and would return by plane within the week. Then our wedding.

Meanwhile I devoted every spare moment to my discovery. It was a set of diagrams, but not the sort of thing to be registered in the patent office.

I must have been mad to believe in the impossible. But I was young and full of dreams; and I did not look very far ahead. I am young now, but no one would ever believe that. I am a victim of my own stupid desires and ambitions--and a strange twist of fate. Had I possessed a scientific mind I would now be as other men. I would have burned that forbidden lore which has not lived since Atlantis. And to realize that even they were aware of it frightens me for the sake of all mankind. Such secrets of time, space and infinity are better left buried in the sea forever.

-SECRET OF ATLANTIS-

I made the discovery July 14, 1943, two days before the little spat with Rhoda. While examining some enlarged photoprints of the queer monoliths on Easter Island, I happened to notice, at the base of one grotesque statue, an odd design, carved deeply in the gray stone. It fascinated me, and I drew a copy of it on a sheet of paper, wondering what alien secrets lurked in that strange pattern. It resembled vaguely a swastika, with numerous transverse lines. I worked at the thing for several minutes; added a few strokes, and suddenly found myself seeing not the sheet of white paper, but the table beneath it.

At first I blamed my eyes. I invented any number of explanations for the phenomenon, but the fact remained; by staring at the design for a second or so I could see through it; see objects beyond it. Startled and amazed, I tried again. This time the table and the wall vanished, and I saw part of the front lawn!

The magnitude of the thing stunned my imagination. I should have been afraid of what had happened, but I wasn't. I was eager to explore its mysteries. Natural laws unknown to man? Black magic? A secret the men of Atlantis had left for future races? The odd statues had had a purpose, after all.....

I did not speculate long on the cause. I was interested in results. A new toy. Fascinating possibilities unfolded before me. I would mock science---its rigid laws and restrictions.

I snatched another sheet and began a second design. Could it be duplicated? I tried. I have always had a knack for drawing, and I used it well that day. I walked across my study to the wall facing the street and placed the second sketch against the plaster, about head high. As I gazed at the mosaic the dark lines and white background seemed to blur and fade into gray nothingness. Then, slowly, certain objects took shape before me. The street became visible. For a long time I stared through that impossible window. I saw people on the sidewalk; my favorite tobacco shop. It happened that I was out of cigarettes, and I remembered suddenly that I hadn't a smoke for hours. This while looking through that strange design. I suppose the desire for nicotine had something to do with what occurred. For, in a few seconds I noticed, to my utter horror and amazement, that the tobacco shop seemed to be moving nearer! Then I realized that I was moving toward the tobacco shop! The shock of this discovery shattered the vision, and the sheet of paper swirled before my eyes. I fell into a chair, trembling.

Had I floated through the magic window? I hadn't walked---that was final; I hadn't moved a muscle, yet I had been nearer. Had my spirit---my ego---been wafted beyond the wall, leaving my body behind? The problem was maddening. Hallucination? Hardly. All had been too vivid, too soul-shaking with stark reality. Why, I'd been so near the tobacco shop I'd seen the kind expression on old Reeves' whiskered face! Had anyone seen me?

There my speculations ended. I would try again and

-SECRET OF ATLANTIS-

find out. That was the only sensible thing to do. After a rest I placed the strange design on the wall in the same spot, stared at it.... Instantly the paper and wood dissolved. I saw the street; pedestrians. I wished for that long-delayed cigarette. And I moved--nearer the tobacco shop. I looked behind me. I saw my house. I was floating on air, buoyant as a shadow. I felt totally alienated from all physical bonds. I moved around the corner of my house and peered in the window of my study. There, standing and staring at a sheet of paper, was my body. It was stiff and motionless. I could not see the expression on my face.

Approaching the sidewalk, I passed several people I knew. They did not see me. No one could see me. Wild, glorious freedom! I floated across the street and looked through Reeves' door. I spoke--or thought I spoke. He turned and stared, a bewildered expression on his face. He glanced through the window at my house, shrugged and picked up his paper. I returned to my study and my body, satisfied. It had worked!

For two days I experimented feverishly. Then on the 16th came the quarrel with Rhoda. When her telegram arrived ---the morning of the 18th---a dazzling idea struck me. How far could I travel? Around the world; into space? I would try. I was bursting with ambition. First I would go to Portland and see Rhoda! Early that afternoon I placed the symbol on the wall of my room, facing west. My watch indicated 1:04 p.m. I fastened my gaze on the diagram.... The earth seemed to be spinning beneath me. I knew exactly where Rhoda's aunt lived. This would be the greatest thrill of all!

Suddenly I found myself in a familiar room--the parlor of the Suffolk apartment. I was hovering near the window overlooking the enclosed garden where Rhoda and I first became engaged. Rhoda stood near the door, beautiful in a simple black gown that clung smoothly to her regal figure. She was alone. Her wrap was on the back of the divan. Going to a motinee, perhaps. Where was her Aunt Sophia? I wanted to glide near Rhoda and whisper in her ear, but I thought that that might frighten her. She moved to the door, as if someone had knocked. I could hear nothing; feel nothing; but I could see.

A man stepped into the room, tall and well-built. He was handsome. I'd never seen him before. Rhoda closed the door, smiled at him, invitingly. There was an air of intimacy about their behavior that I didn't like. A moment they talked and held hands. Then his arms stole around her, and their lips met. She returned his kisses and caresses...damn her black little heart! God! how I wanted my body! Black hatred engulfed me. A fiendish plan leaped into my mind. I was powerful; I would try the impossible. They were on the divan now, sitting very close.

I hovered near the good-looking fellow, in front of his eyes. And I stared into them long and deeply. The glazed look of excitement in his gray orbs faded, changed. The pupils enlarged; his eyes went round with horror. Rhoda's mouth fell open. I bored deeper and deeper into his soul,

-SECRET OF ATLANTIS-

and a great blackness swallowed me. When sight came again I was within a body; his body. Victory! I had forced his mind into submission.

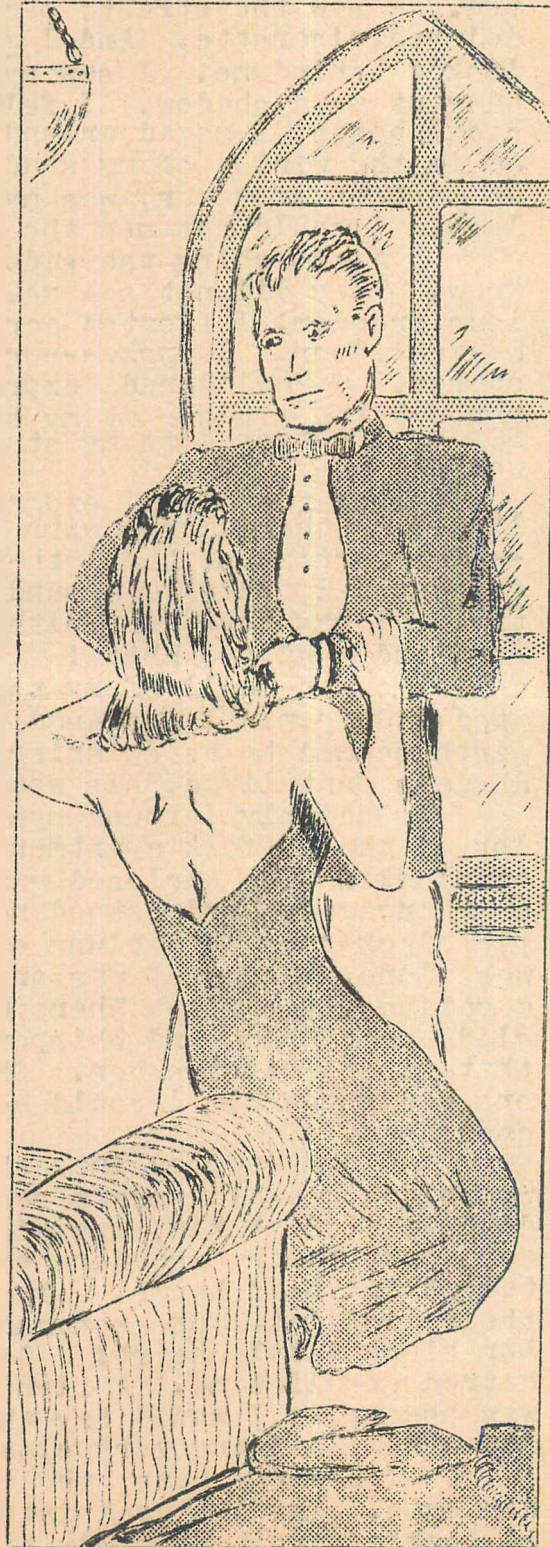
I seized Rhoda by the throat. I dug my fingers into her soft flesh. The scream never came. A wild, unreasoning fear blazed in her eyes. I gouged my thumbs deeper, till her face turned blue and her breast ceased to quiver. She wilted, and I held her neck a moment longer. I threw her lovely body on the floor; I kicked it. Damn her....

Someone was pounding on the door. Rhoda's aunt. Quickly I left the man's body; hovered near the window overlooking the enclosed garden. The tall fellow jumped to his feet a look of horror and amazement on his face. I laughed and laughed, if a shadow can laugh. I whirled around, wild with glee. Curse him; he'd swing for this. He wouldn't be breaking up any more engagements. The room became a mad confusion of policemen and excited on-lookers. I floated out of the window, free.... but on my soul burned a great raw wound.

Perhaps I had pushed Rhoda into his arms. On the very eve of our wedding... no, that was too much. Apparently she had known him a long time. I had done the right thing...

In my study again I could scarcely believe that the sights I had witnessed were real, and not a distorted dream. I knew better than that. I glanced at my watch. 1:46. The same day? It had to be. My whiskers hadn't grown; I wasn't tired. I had been in Portland over half an hour. Nearly a thousand miles in a few seconds.... Time traveling? Had this design no limits?

Sleep that night was impossible, but that orgy of loneliness and despair gave me a daring idea. An escape. The escape a dreamer seeks. I escape



-SECRET OF ATLANTIS-

from the world; from reality; from all earthly madness and fickle human emotions. The alien designs. I would venture into the awesome emptiness of space. I would see so many new and terrible things that my hideous past would be forgotten.

The following morning---July 19th---I had a plan. I would travel to a distant planet; I would rocket through space until my soul became a dead, lifeless thing. I would die millions of miles from the earth, leave behind its cold, inhuman life and rigid limitations. That would be my escape.

Lying in bed, I held the strange design above my head, stared at it, and wished myself far, far away---anywhere. The lines blurred, the room faded and a great darkness engulfed me. Immense forces gripped me. It seemed that I was unconscious for ages. Vision returned at last, and I saw, small in the distance, a tiny planet. I swept nearer and it grew tremendous. Vast seas and forests, jungles and deserts were spread out beneath me. A sight to stun the imagination! A disembodied spirit exploring a strange planet for the first time in recorded history. Had the men of Atlantis seen this marvel? Perhaps....

Circling the globe, I beheld a city, and swiftly approached it. Stone towers and minarets climbed at puzzling angles above broad, tree-lined avenues. All was strange and alien and misshapen. The beings moving in those wide streets shocked me. They were flat and hairy and six-legged; had long beaks. They seemed to be terribly large, but I could judge their size only by their surroundings and my mind's eye. Some wore chained pendants around their long, ungainly necks, designating, no doubt, their social standing. I saw no mechanical means of transportation save huge carts, drawn by ugly alligator-looking things. The long-beaked monsters were not aware of me, and I was glad.

Then occurred the most extraordinary happening of all. I was passing slowly down a broad avenue, watching the curious beings, when I saw a cart, yanked along by two alligators and driven by a native. On the cart was a barred cage. Curiosity assailed me and I went very near the vehicle. Inside the cage was a human being.

I cannot convey the awful shock of that discovery. Seeing a human, or near-human, in a setting so bizarre was the pinnacle of madness. And yet, there it was---the wonder of my expedition. Coming closer yet, I saw that the figure was a woman; a beautiful woman. She wore a ragged tunic and a strip of dark cloth about her loins. She was sitting on the rough floor of the prison, staring at her leather sandals, seeing nothing. Suddenly she raised her head. A lovely face, blonde hair that caressed her shoulders. Her blue eyes gleamed so fiercely that her gaze stabbed my very soul. She seemed to be looking at me---yet I knew that I was invisible. Her expression changed to one of amazement. Her curved lips parted. Her round eyes bored into me. Had she seen me? A spark of wild joy burned in her eyes; she stood up, her strong tanned fingers white upon the heavy metal bars.

Then I seemed to hear a voice. Her lips had not mov-

-SECRET OF ATLANTIS-

ed, I had no ears.... Another question filtered into my consciousness. "Who are you?"

Mental telepathy? What else? I came closer and fashioned an answer. "I am Chester Stenham, from the earth."

She smiled and nodded, eagerly. She motioned me inside the cage. I floated through the bars, and her eyes followed me. She fired questions at me so rapidly I could scarcely form the answers.

"How did you come here?"

I told her about the strange design; where I had found it.

"That must be the mark of my people," she cried wordlessly. "They have not come as you have come for many ages. A long, long time ago my forefathers colonized this world, in the flesh. They had ships that traveled in space. Then these beasts rose from the ground and conquered them by sheer force of numbers. My people were made slaves---they have endured captivity for ages and ages. My great ancestors talked as we are talking long before they left Zelo---your earth. When my forefathers were forced into slavery, their brothers on Zelo were afraid to venture here again. Centuries passed, and one day my parents' great ancestors heard the voices of their people, but could not see them. My forefathers realized that their cousins on the earth had found a way to send their spirits without their bodies. Occasionally they brought news from Zelo. But there was great danger in such an undertaking. When their spirits departed to come here, their bodies on Zelo did not live long. The knowledge of that strange design was suppressed, and many spirit-travelers who came here could not return---they died.

"But we heard that our people were preparing a great expedition in space ships. They were coming to rescue those who had been slaves for so many generations. Then one day a traveling spirit crossed the gulf and told us that Zelo had changed; that great waters had swallowed their land. As far as we know, all but one perished. How that lone spirit lived to tell us, no one knows. There were no more kind voices. The secret had been lost. We did not know it, because the rulers on Zelo had guarded it carefully, and only the few who knew it were able to come here, in spirit. Those same rulers did not favor spirit-travel. They would never let our people use it to visit Zelo. When Zelo perished, so perished our one hope of salvation.

"How you have come---you solved the riddle of that seal which sent my remote ancestors here. You are the first for many, many cycles. We have given up hope. We slaves live in a city of our own, where records are kept. That is how I know all I have told you. These beasts cannot read our language---they cannot hear our silent talk. They do not know how long we have hoped and dreamed...."

"My people have not as yet conquered space," I replied. "If I returned at this instant I could not help you. Your ancestors on the earth were far more civilized than are mine today---or will be in thousands of years."

"I can see that you are from a race whose general in-

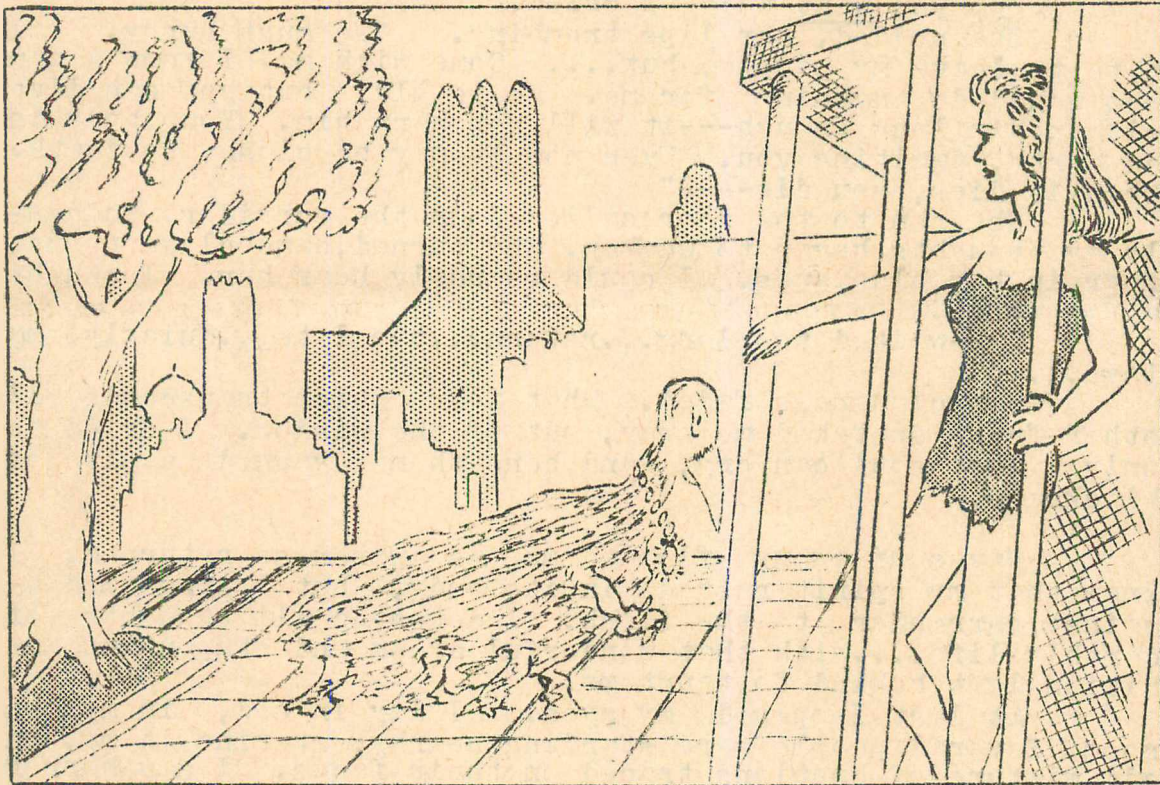
telligence is not high." She said it simply, without mockery. A fact. "When the waters engulfed my race the earth must have been plunged backward into barbarism."

I admitted that this was true. She had a super-mind. Many emanations from her agile brain escaped me utterly. I was awed in the presence of such mental power; and yet, she was very beautiful. I remembered suddenly my resolve to forget all earthly things, and the memory stabbed me.

She seemed to read my mind, and I felt uncomfortable. A curtain dropped between us.

"I would like to stay here always," I said. "If I had a body----" The experience in Portland....

She stared through the bars of the swaying wagon. I thought I saw a far-away, wistful gleam in her blue eyes.



She looked so forlorn and helpless I had a strange, wild impulse to catch her in my arms...but I had no arms! She smiled and flushed.

"You'd better go now," she said. "The cart has stopped---soon I will go to work. Come to the city of the slaves tonight. I will show you where I live, alone. I have something to tell you---of great importance---"

That night, as I glided toward the slave-city, a large red moon rode swiftly through the sky. Again the strangeness of my surroundings overwhelmed me. Here was freedom, and, perhaps, an alien companion....

I found her room in a high tower near the center of the walled city. I marvelled at the queerly-angled struct-

ures rising about me; stared in wonder at the shadows that fell below them. A light gleamed beyond the bars in her windows. One of them was open and I floated through it. She rose from a low couch; her curved lips formed a glad cry. Our first thoughts came slowly. She was troubled.

"I must tell the truth," she said. "I, too, want you to stay, more than anything I know. But we would be captives here----"

"I could stay if I had a body---I entered one on the earth. But we would not have to remain here always. Once in a body, I could draw the design again; draw two of them. Then we could escape, travel to a peaceful planet, and enter other bodies!"

There were tears in her eyes. "I---I hoped you would say that----" She had reasoned it out ahead of me!

"Do you want to?" I cried.

She nodded, her lips trembling. "We must hurry. I hate to leave my people, but.... Come with me. I know a man who would do anything for me. He is old, but you can live within him long enough---it will not harm him. Your body is on earth, awaiting you. Even now it may be close to death. When it dies, you die----"

She ran to the door; called down the corridor. Suddenly my thoughts began to weaken. She turned, came close to me, fear in her blue eyes. I could scarcely hear her. I caught a few words.

"---waited too long...return...too late...quickly, my love...."

Consciousness faded. That fear which transcends all other fears snatched me away, out of the window. I cried as only a lost soul can cry, and beneath me yawned a pit of blackness.

Waves of agony flooded me as awareness returned. I knew that my spirit rested in its body, but I struggled against surrender to the flesh. I detested all thoughts of earthly life....with that wonderful dream and stupendous ambition left behind to taunt me.

At last I opened my eyes. I lay in bed, in my own room. Several people were standing nearby, staring at me, an odd mixture of emotions traced on their faces. I saw horror and fear and awe. I tried to sit up, but Doctor Eldridge pushed me back, gently.

"Take it easy, Chet. You've passed through a trying ordeal---"

"What day is this?" I demanded. My voice was hoarse and cracked. There were long whiskers on my face.

The doctor spoke. "This is August the eighth."

My God! Gone three weeks. Or perhaps a year and three weeks. I was afraid to ask about that.... None of the men seemed older. Reeves, his kind face sad and bewildered, looked the same. Then I saw the calendar. 1943. Twenty days had seemed like a few hours.

The doctor motioned the people from the room, and regarded me carefully. "Chet, you've been in a coma since July

-SECRET OF ATLANTIS-

20th, when Reeves found you. You've been sinking lower and lower. This morning I was afraid you were going---so I sent for one very near and dear to you."

I heard a commotion outside the bedroom door. Someone entered the room. The quick footsteps halted. I turned my head, faced the newcomer. A girl. I cursed. It was Rhoda. I hadn't killed her, after all----

She saw me, and fear welled in her eyes. She backed away, her hand clutching her mouth. She started to scream; then she fainted. The doctor caught her, carried her to a nearby couch. A nurse brought water.

"My God!" I cried weakly, "what's the matter with me?"

"Be calm, Chet. You've had a terrible time. Many doctors have been here---they cannot explain or understand why you have aged so rapidly."

"Age!" I screamed. "Give me a mirror!" I ran my hands over my face. Long whiskers. Deep clefts under my cheekbones; sunken eyes.... Eldridge gave me the mirror. Then I saw the horror.

Three weeks have passed since my return to earth. I can get around the house with a cane. I am feeble and wasted; an old man. Within a single month I lived half a lifetime. Going so far had sapped my youth, my life. How long had I been on that world? I don't know. Time is relative. Impossible to cheat both time and the elements. No wonder that awful knowledge had been suppressed. No wonder there had been so few spirit explorers from ancient Atlantis....

I am doomed to die in a few years. Life holds nothing more for me. Escape into space is beyond all hope. My ebbing strength would last but a few hours; never could I hope to reach that distant world, where she is waiting....

Rhoda recovered from her first shock, and visited me again. I sneered at her and told her that I was sick of her. She actually confessed her amour with the stranger in Portland---the man whom she thought had nearly killed her. That, she said, had taught her many things. I told her to get out. I don't want sympathy.

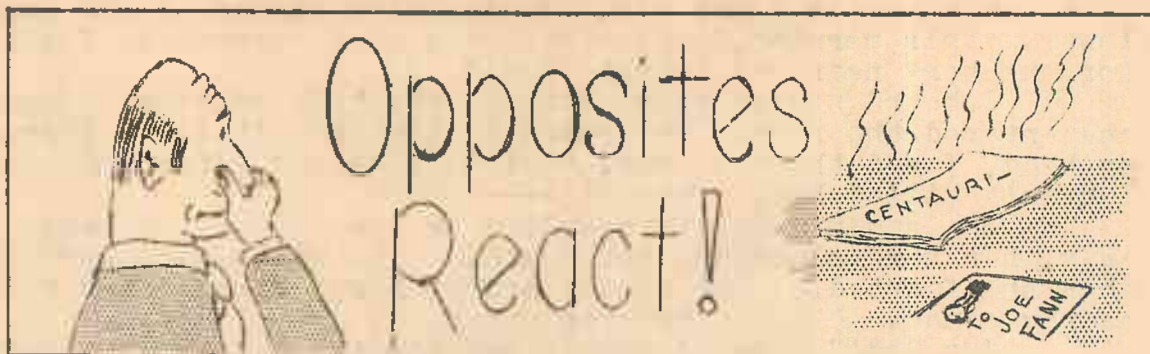
I am ready to die. Only in the grave will I find the peace of utter oblivion from the haunting memory of an un-earthly love and the freedom of a vast, mysterious universe.

--000--

The second issue of *Centauri*

Centauri will be out Jan. 8

It will contain fiction by H.J. Nuttall and Art R. Schnert, two fan columns, poetry by Ted Hunter, Nuttall and Gray, a cartoon by Joe Kennedy, two (2) beautiful nudes and two excellent articles, "What's Palmer's IQ?" by T.W. Ainslie and "Why Not Try Sanity?" by Paul Carter, guaranteed to be the 'hottest' article fandom has seen in many a day. All for five cents from 1414 Poplar, Memphis 4, Tennessee.



Strange to say, the response in letters to my first issue was pretty good. I'm sorry I couldn't print all of them, or even parts of all, but if the response to this issue is as great as that to the first, I intend to enlarge this section somewhat. Here are the ratings as compiled from all letters received, in a one-to-eight order:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1--The Unnamed | 5--Comments From Centauri |
| 2--Not What You Think | 6--Strained Innertube |
| 3--The Frain From Orlotha | 7--Sid Dean Articlette |
| Drill (tie) | Goddess of the Cosmos |
| 4--Encyclopedia of Fandom | 8--Art (including covers) |

The others I didn't even bother rating. Those ratings, incidentally, are very general, since so few ratings cannot present an accurate picture. For the most part, everybody was in agreement, though certain items were rated much differently by various fans. I have tried, in choosing the letters to go into this section, to present as diversified a group as possible. I hope I have also succeeded in publishing the most interesting.

Our first brick-thrower is a co-editor of Sappho, the amazing George Eboy (4766 Reinhardt Drive, Oakland, Cal) and this famed proz and fnz critic says, and I quote:

Well. . . I got CENTAURI. There it lay. Jutting out of the mail box. I plucked it from its envelope, turned four or five pages and the damn thing disintegrated. Now I carry CENTAURI rolled up in a ball. The format suffers.

For a new 'zine CENTAURI has some good material. What isn't good is innocuous. What isn't innocuous is--well, I'll get to that later.

Pong's piece is best, of course, but Warner's column and Not What You Think (stupid title) are both of worth. The fiction is above average: I was able to read both stories all the way through, something I can't say for most fan fiction.

The contents page puzzles me. Under humor, you have something called Strained Intertube. If a continued stream of sentences such as this: "It was here that I made my first mistake, but being of a mechanical turn of mind, it turned

Opposites---React!

out well and I decided to patent it upon my return to earth" is humor, then I'm a Hottentot. On the other hand, the finest example of humor in the magazine is labeled "verse". I just laughed and laughed and laughed while reading Baker's "poem", but Daniel's "humor" didn't even elicit a giggle.

As regards Teleportation---I'd advise Powlowski to obtain a text-book on atomic structure and then maybe he'd know what he's talking about. Reinhold is an engaging fellow, in the third paragraph: "Impossible? Not so much. The machine merely transforms matter into light radiations." That's all. "Merely transforms matter into energy and then reforms the energy into matter. That's all. It's alright to read stuff like this in a story, but in a factual article ...well, it's no wonder stf has been called "pseudo-science".

Back to something more agreeable---the half-page ads scattered thruout the magazine. I always enjoy reading fanads: They're sort of a combined news sheet and barometer of the field.

Further comments: format is quite neat---as a whole the mag is well set up...the art is ghastly, hideous, atrocious and a few other things, but that's the way it is with most fan mags...editorial is clearly written....

I note on page six, the words "sample copy", and above, the sentence "if you want to continue getting this fanzine...send in your subscriptions." Andrew, you shock me. 1. I haven't got a dime. I'm broke. I'm even taking this letter over to Wright's to borrow a stamp. 2. I can always exchange Sappho for Centauri. 3. I offer two suggestions, either of which should be good for a subscription: call Warner's column FTGTFERA and the reader's section "Opposites---React!" Give the first subscription to some needy fan like Wright---this ought to get me a six cent stamp, at least---and send the other one to me.

Come now, George---I realize that I am the hideous monstrosity of the fan field, but I was sure that a fan, being so used to reading of them, could not be shocked by such a minor one as me. Anyway, you get your subscription. Tom isn't a needy fan, for (1.) he is no longer a fan, and (2.) he gets this, er, ah, this---well, he gets Centauri already. Warner's column is still The Unnamed because quite a number of letters remarked that that title was original and gives him lots of range. Besides, it saves me two-bits. I thought of that name myself. Speaking of Harry, let's hear what he has to say (303 Fryen Place, Hagerstown, Md):

Centauri No. 1 was a pleasant surprise to me; very neatly done, and with very decent material. The only real trouble is that the staples have an annoying tendency to pull out, despite your commendable extravagance in sticking four of the precious things into each copy. The fan who invents a method of binding fat fanzines like these with an inexpensive, quick and substantial something, will be doing fan culture an inestimable service.

Both stories were very decent, Daniel's being super-

Opposites---React!

ior to Burbee's, in my estimation, though I can't really judge fairly because I read "Drill" as it appeared in the magazine, not realizing the pages were mixed up until finishing the first wrongly inserted page, then going on unsuspectingly to the next, never dreaming the same error would recur immediately following. It made things slightly hard to follow, but was refreshingly different, and sort of exciting. I ought to have read your editorial sooner, I suppose. Said editorial, incidentally, was very good and should continue to be so if you write only as much as you really need to say. "Teleportation" leaves me understanding less about the subject than before I read the article; either I'm unbelievably dumb, or the article isn't what it should be. Humor pretty decent, though Tucker's page was far below his usual level, Faker's poem spoiled only by a bad line here and there that lessens the good effect produced by the rest of it, and Dean's articlette is the sort of thing that makes me see red, and inspires Doug Webster to write swell articles in rebuttal. Art excellent throughout, and I'm waiting for the second issue!

It seems that quite a few copies fell apart in the mails, for which I'm awfully sorry. The only stapler (with staples) that I am able to use isn't large enough for the herculean task assigned to it. This issue should hold together, though--the paper I'm using isn't quite so bulky and there is one less leaf than last time. As for attempting to devise a new binding, it's an entrancing idea, and possibly I can manage to figure something out. Next on the list is Ray Verden, the editor of Cluster. (409 12th, Cloquet, Minn)

The mimeoing was legible, fortunately, but I do think you should use white paper for most of the issue. Much clearer. Your front cover was excellent, and the rear only a little worse. But if the artist pictures a concrete scene like that, it loses much of its effect not having a text to accompany it. The article on teleportation was the worst thing in the ish. Besides being a flagrant contravention of all scientific writing, the author asserts that our radio works because of light waves! From what I have been able to pick up of high school physics, it's news to me. Can he explain it? In fact, can anyone explain it?

Warner has an excellent idea in his column. If I had a mimeo, I'd see what I could do. Perhaps I will anyway. (By the way, as soon as I get a mimeo--can god, or anyone, help me?--I'm going to go one further on your "all stfazine" and put out one completely devoted to future civilizations as mirrored in stf. It will be known as VISTA.)

Teleportation was the one item in the last issue that received universal onions. Allowing it to creep into the mag was an error that won't happen again, I promise you! Space is short, so I'd better get on to the last letter of this issues batch. It's from Charles McPutt, 2721 16th St., Everett, Washington.

Opposites---React!

Oh you sly devil, you coy boy, you foxy---(Hey, what rhymes with foxy?) Anyway, this all means that I was very much surprised---pleasantly so, I might add---by the arrival of CENTAURI. The impression I got that it was very neat, far surpassing my feeble attempt at a fan-magazine. Of course, it is to be noted that a bit more effort and money was soaked in your enterprise than in mine. A Warnerating (1-to-10) follows, knowing, since I too was once a fan-editor, how much these trifles are appreciated.

COVER: The same thing holds true for this as it did for PARADOX and SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRS in that the drawing originally was probably good, but after undergoing the epochal task of ye stencilingge came out rather worn and very unartistic. Also, the subject is thoroughly stereotyped. Sorry, but I can't go any better than 6 on this.

TOC(Table-of-contents) Very neat, but not original. You'll have to excuse my harping on this one subject, but it has always been my main beef. If that type TOC were patented, plagiarism would run rampant thruout fandom, methinx. 5.

EDITORIAL: Ah, now this is an entirely different matter. Intelligently written, wholesome, refreshing, and, above all, informative.

NOT WHAT YOU THINK: Uninteresting, but splendidly written so literally begs for an eight. Will do. 8.

DEAN'S DIALOGUE: Diminutive version of Degler's "COSMIC REVOLUTION". He rehash the idea foremost in everyone's mind: World betterment. Surely he must realize that such a little interjection couldn't even help to stir anyone's emotions to an acting point.

THE UNNAMED: Doesn't seem so nondescript--so unnamable to me as all that. Might call it "Warner's Wanderings" or "This'n That". However, Harry's views are a bit impractical now. Before the war, with fan-mags galore, it would have been a dilly, but now ten'll get you twenty that no one takes him up on it. 8.

RIMEL: 9. From a pseudo-professional what else? It was pretty good. Exceptionally so for a fmz.

POEM: 8. No commentte.

STRAINED INNERTUBE: 9. Hyaw, hyaw, hyaw. Tom's first attempt at humor is very compelling. The title kills me! Yahk, yahk, yahk.

DRIL: 10. This is the second ten Burbee has made for himself. More power to the guy, he's really good.

PONG: 7. Tuck's last five articles were way below standard. S'Matter with 'im? And the number one fan, too---for shame, for shame.

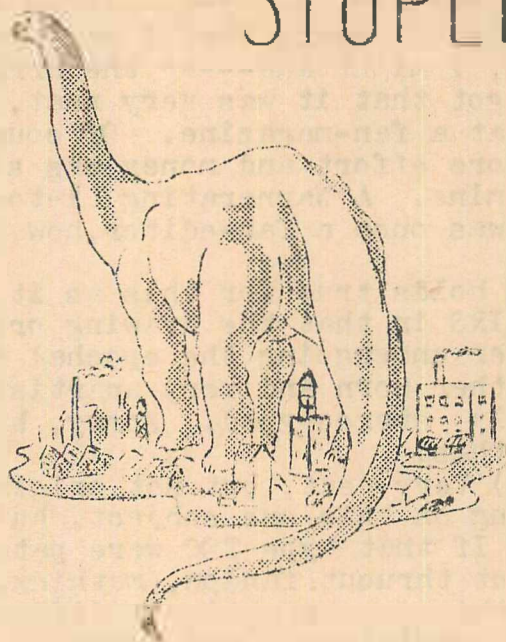
ART: Ranged from good to bad. Andy and Hoffman in the former category. I regret to place Hoffman there, because basically he stinx, but such is the case.

BACOVER: 6. The girl reminded me ever so much of a femme Taurasi drew for Spaceways, and the REM smells strongly familiar.

ISH AS A WHOLE: 7, which is two points above average

-Concluded on Next Page-

STUPENDOUS!



That's the adjective describing the second issue of Mel Brown's FAN STANTS, out Feb 1. It will feature art by Ronald Clyne, FTlaney's Fran---Fout, Fassbinder's Reflections on Falling Over Backwards In a Swivel Chair, Gus Wilmoth's Further Adventures in England, an Egyptology article by Walt Daugherty and one entitled Toward Utopia-No! by Thompson, plus other first-rate material by Ackerman, Maliano and others. You may obtain your copy by writing Mel Brown at 628 S. Bixel, Los Angeles 14, Calif.

Shades of Cthulhu!

Don't tell me this is another one of those dratted blurbs for Toward Tomorrow? We've been hearing about it for well over a year now - but when is it coming out?

Oh, the damned thing will be out sometime soon now.

Who's talking about the DAMN THING? Yerke put that out some time ago, and there isn't even any comparison. Toward Tomorrow is a different type of a mag altogether.

Why? What is it like? That would be telling--just send your dime to Jike at 628 S. Bixel, Los Angeles 14, Calif., and one of these days he'll get around to finishing it and dropping your copy in the mails.

Opposites---React! (continued from preceding page)

so you may rest easy, you haven't made a fool of yourself. Keep up the good work, and suffice it to say you have already found my bulky quarter.

Are there any original contents pages? It seems to me that plagiarism would run rampant over the entire publishing field if a half-dozen or so TOCs were allowed to be patented. I'm always glad to receive suggestions on new and original ways of doing things; if they appear to be neat enough, and enough in keeping with my general format to warrant their acquisition, I may be able to use them.

Well, dear fans, that apparently does it for this issue, so adios for now, and don't forget to write!



